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In thy truth I will prays thee O Lord my god
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THE

Pious Christians Devotio

And most Excellent

Family-COMPANIO

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TO

Eternal Life and Glory, in t

perfect Enjoyment of God,

AND

The Blessed Fellowship of Saints and An

CONTAINING

Motives to the True Service of God; the mann
Holy Living, &c. a true Prospect of the Chr
Religion in its purity. Self-Examination in
gious Duties towards God and our Neighbour
Preparation for the Receiving the Holy Sacram
Behaviour Before and After; with Prayers,
Examination by way of Question and Answer
we understand Receiving that adorable Myst
with Thanksgiving and Divine Meditation.
ctions of Behaviour in Fasting and Humiliation,
vate and publick, &c.

With Prayers on several Occasions.

LONDON,
Printed by *W.* and *J. Wilde*, for *J. Deacon* at the
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Licenſed and Entred,

Auguſt, 15*th*.
1691.

THE PREFACE TO THE Christian READER.

Reader,

IN this little Book you will find such things as will no doubt raise your Soul upon the Wings of Divine Love, and Holy Desire of travelling towards the glorious Regi-

ons of Eternal Bliſs, and make you breathe and pant after the Well-ſprings of Life. Here, as out of a curious Garden repleniſhed with delightfull Fruits and Flowers, you may gather a Divine Banquet or Poſie, to pleaſe the Taſte and refreſh the Spirit with nouriſhment and fragancy in its way through the Wilderneſs of this World, ſtrengthening him that receives it aright, to hold out to the Gates of the Celeſtial Paradice, till he is there received by the Heavenly Inhabitants, and furniſhed with another ſort of Food, whoſe Taſte is inexpreſſible. To be plain, This Divine Treatiſe is furniſhed with Milk for Babes and ſtrong Meats for riper years, being compacted of ſacred Inſtructions neceſſary to be known in the Duties of Religion, and a Holy Life; being

ſuited

suited to the use of all Sexes and Qualities, and humbly presented as a Jewel of great Price, worthy to be worn on the Heart of every pious Christian; and so commending it to your serious Perusal, I remain

Yours, *&c.*

J. S.

THE Pious CHRISTIANS DEVOTION,

And most Excellent

Family-Companion, &c.

CHAP. I.

Holy Motives to engage us in the Service of God, and pursue the ways of Righteousness, grounded on the Promises of Salvation to those that do well, and Condemnation to those that live in sinful ways.

SInce God of his infinite Goodness, has in an extraordinary manner furnished mankind with an excellent Nature, Wisdom and Choice; an understanding Soul, and an immaterial Spirit, having made him absolute Lord

over created Beings, and but a little lower than the Angels, it is highly reasonable that according to the Abilities the Creator has endowed him with, he should serve and adore him, (acknowledging that Bounty and Goodness with the utmost Gratitude that has showr'd such Blessings upon him, such as are not only Temporal, but that he has even a possibility given him to attain those that are Eternal, exceeding all Expression or Language to render them Comprehensive; and yet to which he can only arrive by Service and Obedience. Therefore, as every individual Person is wholly God's portion by the Title of Creation, so all our Endeavours, Faculties and Powers ought to be entirely employed in his Service, even all the days of our Life; that when we shall put off these perishing Robes of Mortality, and Death shall set us free from the innumerable Troubles, Cares, and Calamities attending on this Life we may live with him for ever, in a blessed Eternity.

It is not sufficient, that the Service of God is imprinted in our minds, as a work of the least necessity, or of small importance, but that it be duly, and with much Care, and Diligence, done and performed by us, as God intended it. That is, with great Earnestness, and a passionate Love, and Reverence towards him, with

with fervent Zeal, Breathings, Pantings, and a longing Desire after him, refusing no Labour, but improving all opportunities, and accounting no time so well bestowed, as what we spend in serving our Maker, who is the Author of our Being, and our Well-being, and from whom, as from the Fountain of Mercy and Goodness, we receive all the Good things that flow to us, that at last we may arrive at the end of Glory, by all the ways of Grace, Prudence and Religion.

And indeed, if we consider, how great a part of our Lives is taken up by the needs of Nature, how many years are passed over, before we come to a Right understanding; or that our Reason is useful to us in any material Purposes, and various other Obstructions, that in spite of our Vigilance and Discretion, will at one time or other interpose and intrude upon us; we shall find that little Portion of hours, that remain for the Practice of Piety, Holy Duties, and Religiously walking with God, is so short and trifling, that were not his Goodness infinitely great, it might seem unreasonable or impossible, for such frail Creatures as we are to expect eternal Joys in Heaven, for the well-spending a few moments in imperfect Services, when the greater part of our Lives has been taken up in Vanity, or in serving our selves.

Yet

Yet we see, what a gracious and merciful God we have to deal with, who from even those few moments of Prayer, and the Exercise of a pious Life, raises up to us a Stock of Glory, and from the small Seeds of true Contrition, and a Hearty sorrow for Sin, Spring up Scepters and Crowns in a Kingdom that shall never have end.

From these Considerations, I come to lay down what is immediately necessary to be observed, and done by those that are desirous of the exceeding great Reward, prepared by God from the Foundation of the World, for such as lead a Holy Life, and walk uprightly in his way.

The First thing to be premised, then is, That we seriously consider, the time we have in this Life, is chiefly allowed us as a Talent, to improve to God's Glory, and the advantage of our own Souls; that we may enjoy a Life hereafter, not subject to end nor change. God hath indeed given Man but a short time upon Earth; but yet upon it, most certainly depends an Eternity of Happiness or Misery, so that for every moment after we come to Discretion, and know good from evil, we must be accountable in the last day, and our Saviour brings it more near to us, *viz.* That we must be accountable for every idle word,

word, not accounting or meaning, that every word which is not designed for Edification, or is less prudent shall be reckoned a Sin, but that the time spent in idle Talking, and unprofitable Discourses, might and ought to be spent, and imployed to spiritual and useful Purposes, is to be accounted for, and the cited Party to give a Reason, if he be able (which he will hardly be in that great and terrible day) why he preferred trifling Vanities, before laying hold of all opportunities to serve his God.

CHAP. II.

Instructions for the manner of Holy and upright Living in this World, that we may have Eternal Life, and Glory in that which is to come: in Rules and Directions to behave our selves in Religious Duties, and on other Occasions; with a Prayer for Humility, Perseverance and eternal Happiness.

IF you would employ your time well, let your lying down be with Prayers, and Thanksgiving, for the many Mercies you have received; and when you awake in

in the Morning, fix your thoughts first of all upon God, or something that may tend to his Service, and employ all the Intervals of time, that Works of necessity, or your Occupation requires not, in Meditation, Prayers, Works of Charity, and Friendly Offices; and above all things avoid evil Company, which may draw us away almost insensibly, to those Wickednesses that may prove fatal and ruinous to our Souls.

Secondly, Let even our Intentions be pure, since God sees our very thoughts in their framing, and weighs our secret Actions in the Ballance, there is nothing can Escape his narrow searching Eyes, we may indeed deceive Men by Hypocrisie, Dissimulation, and an outward shew of Sanctity, but God who seeth and knoweth all things cannot be deceived; therefore let us do all the good Acts, and Offices we can sincerely, and from our Hearts, least the Reward of Hypocrites be our Portion, and that Woe be pronounced against us, as was pronounced against the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*, whose inward intention of Purity, had no Coherence with their outward Actions: for a Holy intention, to the Actions of a Man, is that which the Soul is to the Body, or Form to it's Matter, or the Root to the Tree, or the Fountain to the River, or the Sun

to the World; for without these the Body is a dead Trunk, the Matter sluggish, the Tree a Block, the River quickly dry, and the World is left in Darkness. To give Alms, or do any work for Vain-glory, or to gain the applause of Men, looses the Reward in Heaven, because you only seek your Reward on Earth; therefore in all your Actions reflect upon the end of your Undertaking, and consider why you do them, and what you propound to your self as a Reward, and to your Actions as to their ends. Let every Action of Concernment be begun with Prayer, imploring the Almighty's assistance for a Blessing, and re-kindle your desire of doing good by short Ejaculations; and say, *Not unto us, not unto us O Lord, but to thy holy name, all praise be given*; then consider you are working the work of God as his Servant, and are in a happy Employment, in doing your Master's business, and are not at your own disposal, but are using his Talents to offer him up the Improvement, which is properly his own; and then be sure as the Glory is his, so the Reward shall be thine; if you brings his Goods home with increase, like a faithful Servant, he will make thee Ruler over Cities; and these are true Marks of the Purity of intention in our Hearts, *viz.*

1. To love Vertue for God's sake, and it's own; honouring and reverencing it wherever it is found.

2. To have low and mean thoughts of the World, and it's appendant Vanities, and to let neither Riches, Honour, or any Affection you bear to things below, stand in Competition with the Love you bear to God.

3. When we are not Solicitous concerning the Instruments, and means of our Actions, but use those means which God hath laid before us, with a perfect Resignation and Indifferency; and when our Intentions are thus ballanced, regulated and discerned, then it is that we may consider, that this Exercise is of so universal Efficacy, in the whole Course of a Holy Life, that it is like the Soul to every Holy Action.

There are moreover, some Actions which are accounted as part of our Religion, and leading to a Holy Life, which yet of themselves are so relative, and imperfect, that they degenerate without Purity of Intention; as Alms for Charity, Fasting for Temperance, Prayer for Religion, Humiliation for Humility, Austerity, or Sufferance for the Vertue of Patience; for if these are not Intentionally done, from the very Heart and Soul, they are in Effect

sect, as if they had been never undertaken, and consequently of no Efficacy; be sincere then, if you would be Happy? If you would receive the Wages, work freely and willingly in God's Vineyard. Let not the stormy Winds of Adversity; no, nor yet the scorching Sun-beams of Persecution shake your Intentions, to labour diligently to make your Calling and Election sure, in working out your Salvation; and then with the Prophet you may joyfully say, *The Lot is fallen to me in a fair Land, I have a goodly Inheritance.* And to wean your selves the better from the World, ponder every one with your selves, and say,

The PRAYER.

O Lord thou givest me in some measure, of thy Goodness in this World, which is as it were the first Service of thy Feast; but suffer me not like a famished Guest, to over-gorge my self, and glut my Desires only upon the things of this Life; but give me some Taste of the Services that are to come, and I shall so much the more reserve my self for them, by how much, both in Excellency and Abundance they do exceed. O Lord I beseech thee, let me take sparingly of the Pleasures of this World; let me pass by them,

let

let me tread upon them with disdainful Scorn, give me not in this Transitory Life my Lot, or Portion; but reserve it in store for me in the Life eternal, though here I eat or drink the bread or water of Affliction, let me hereafter be satisfied with the abundance of thy House, O Lord my God, my Redemption and my Trust: Let my hope Anchor on thy Mercies, and my Rejoycings be in the abundance of thy loving Kindness.

These and such like Considerations, and Actions will purchase us the Balm of Mercies, to break our stony Hearts, and lenifie the corroding Wounds, Sin has imprinted on our Souls.

CHAP. III.

What the Christian Religion is, and how we ought to behave our selves under Christ's Banner, in our spiritual Warfare; whereby we may overcome Temptations, and follow in all things we are able, the Example of the Lord Jesus.

THE Christian Religion derives it's Name and Principles, from our great Lord and Master Jesus Christ, the Author and

and Finisher of our Faith, and the Victorious Captain of our Salvation, who for our sakes laying aside his Diadem of Stars, and Robes of Majesty, came down from the blissful Bosom of his Almighty Father, to subdue for us those fatal Enemies, that otherwise would have unavoidably involved us in eternal Ruin, *viz.* Death and Hell, over which, in dying for our Redemption, he has triumphed Gloriously; and leading Captivity Captive, is ascended on high, and there resuming his Power, and Dominion, is become not only our Saviour, but our most merciful Mediator, and Intercessor; being desirous to see the Travel of his Soul, in mankind's Obedience to his Fathers Will, that so he may be satisfied. Then to do like good Christians, we must ever have his Example before our Eyes and imitate him, who is our King and our Head, unto whom if we are ingrafted as Members, happy are we; and that we may be so Blessed, we must pray for God's Assistance; for no Man hath strength of his own Will, but is supported by the indulgence and mercy of God. Now the Will of God is, that which Christ did, and taught whilst he remained amongst us visible on Earth, constancy in Faith, modesty in Speech, Justice in Actions, Works of Mercy and Compassion, Patient of Injuries, Peaceableness,

and

and to love God, with all the affecti-
ons of the Heart; and to prefer no-
thing before Christ, who preferre
nothing before us; as appears by wha
he has done and suffered for us: If w
take up his Cross, he will enable
to bear it, and be with us in a
adversities; not suffering us to b
tempted, above what we are able t
bear. If we find we are pressed to
hard, and we pray against the Wile
and Stratagems of Satan, we have
promise that we shall be assisted b
the mighty power of Gōd; who wil
not give the Enemy advantage over us
unless it be to Correct us when w
grow presumptuous, or offend; or eli
to Glorifie us, when we are try'd, an
have escaped his Ambushes. Therefor
let us Watch and Pray, that we en
ter not into Temptation; and if w
keep our selves from the Evil of Sin
we shall not fail to be kept from th
Evil of Punishment; for when once w
have got the Divine Protection, w
shall be secure from the Assaults
the World, and the Devil.

Wherefore seeing we are taught b
our Lord's Example, who prayed for th
forgiveness of our Sins, and for the en
crease of our Graces; for he had no Sin
of his own, that he should pray for th
forgive

forgiveneſs of them; ſurely we have great reaſon to do it for our Selves: Let us do it then at all ſeaſonable times, with all our Hearts and Strength, expreſſing our ſelves in an extraordinary acknowledgment towards God, for the Mercies we have received; that he may ſtill repleniſh our thankfull Souls with his Bleſſings: Let us put on the Garments of Meekneſs and Charity, that we may by our humble Carriage and Behaviour, gain the Love and good Will of Men; for that is that which becomes a Chriſtian, *viz.* to walk void of Offence towards God and Man, taking heed to offend Either; and our Bleſſed Saviour, has layed the whole ſtreſs of the Chriſtian Religion, upon our Love to God and our Neighbour; for if we Love God with all our Hearts, with all our Souls, and with all our Strength, we will not do any thing to diſpleaſe him, or grieve his Holy Spirit; and if we Love our Neighbour as our ſelves, we ſhall upon all occaſions labour to Cheriſh, and ſupport him with good Council, and ſuch Neceſſaries and Conveniencies, for his advantages, as we are able to Contribute to the making him happy, or well pleaſed with us: for as our bleſſed Lord tells us, *Never no Man yet hated his own Fleſh, but rather cheriſhed it.*

Let

Let not your minds be disturbed with suddain Cares, Fears, or Trouble; for those that truely Love God, forsake all other things, and retire to him, as the unshaken Rock, on which they lay their Foundation; addicting themselves to the Exercise of Vertue, and the performance of his Will and Commands.

And thus having your self always in a stayed and gentle Course, your mind will never start from God, but in Meditations, Prayer, or Ejaculations at all times be with him; and these will season your thoughts, to all other Christian Duties, and especially, with pleasurable reflections on the admirable goodness of God: And by thus doing, when the Soul is alone by it self, God will be present to assist it; for whoever heartily solicites the assistance of the Divine Goodness, shall be able to do the Will of God, with cheerfullness and delight; for then your Faith shall be changed to a fruition; and if we run the Race well, we shall be sure of the Reward, which will be a Crown of Eternal Glory.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

Self Examination; or, serious Questions to be put to our Hearts, and Consciences, in relation to the performance of our Duties towards God, and our Neighbour; with the operation and Effects of Divine Love.

1. DO I love God with all my Heart, with all my Strength? Is my Love entire to him, and to him only do I grieve to offend him; and hate Sin, because it is detestable in his sight?

2. Have I made his Law my delight, and taken pleasure in doing his Commandments? Have I been grieved when others have broken them, and reproved them for their Sin? Have I taken care to examine and try my ways, and search out my secret Sins, that cunningly lurk in the Corners of my Heart? Have I been humbled, and broken before my Maker, for doing the things I ought not to do; and for not doing the things I ought to have done? Have I been meek, and humble, patient in Adversity, and not puffed up in Prosperity? Have I not denyed to take up my Cross when offer'd me, to follow my blest-

sed

sed Saviour? Do I own him as perf
God, and perfect Man; God begot
of the Father, before all Worlds;
that, for us, and our Salvation, he c
down from Heaven, and was, by
power of the Holy Ghost Incarnate
the Virgins Womb, and made Man;
king our humane Nature upon him,
he might redeem us from Hell, and e
lasting Destruction; which through
fall of *Adam*, and the aggravation of
own Sins, was fatally our Portion?
I believe, he suffered, dyed, and
again for our Justification; That he
cended into Heaven, and there sits
the Right Hand of the Father, to m
Intercession for us, and procure our
rification?

Do I believe in the Holy Ghost
Lord and Giver of Life, proceeding f
the Father and the Son, who with
Father and the Son, is one only G
Trinity in Unity, blessed for evermo
Do I frequent God's Service, and the
Mysteries ordain'd? *&c.*

Do I Love my Neighbours as
self? Have I labour'd to do to
Men, all the Good I can? Have I c
passionated their Infirmities, Contribu
to their needs and necessities? H
I not been bitter to any, but com
ted them in all their Afflictions? H

I h

I been patient in bearing Affronts, and Injuries; without seeking revenge, or recompence, by any violent ways? Have I not Coveted unlawfully what appertained to others; but been contented with what God had bestowed upon me? Have I been Courteous and Affable in my Behaviour, towards all Men; not bearing my self Proudly, or Contentiously? Have I laboured to compose Differences to the utmost of my power, that I might gain to my self the Blessing of a Peace-maker? Have I not turned away mine Eyes, nor my Ears, from the Nakedness, and Cries, of the poor and afflicted? Have I such a Love to Vertue, that I reverence it, wherever I perceive it? Do I cheerfully obey those that are set in Authority over me without Grudging?

Do I visit the Sick, and Helpless People; relieve them to my abilities, and give them good Advice for their Souls; labouring to rescue the oppressed from the hands of the Oppressor; and in fine, to do all the good Offices I can? for Love to God, and our Neighbour, is the fulfilling the Law, and the Prophets, and indeed if rightly considered, the

only thing enjoyned us to make us happy, in the sensibility of our Duty; for Love does all things, that may please the beloved Person; it performs all his Commands, and this is one of the greatest Instances and Arguments, that God requires of us; *This is Love, that we keep his Commandments.* Love is obedient; it doth all, it does all the intimations, and significations of his Pleasure whom we Love; it relieves all that he would have relieved; it suffers all things that are Imposed by his beloved, or that can happen for his sake. In loving God, we must love him with all our Hearts, with an undivided affection; giving no part of it to any thing else but what he allows; Love endeavours for ever to be present; True Love in all accidents, looks upon the beloved Person; this Love is curious of little Things, of Circumstances and Measures, and little Accidents, not allowing to it self any infirmity which it strives not to Master: and thus we might attempt to go on to infinite Degrees.

In Considerations of this divine Vertue, but not to puzzle the Reader in a Mazy Labyrinth, we leave lesser Idea's to treat of the highest perfection of

of divine Love, on this side Heaven.

CHAP. V.

Directions for Preparation, and worthily Receiving Spiritually, the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus, *in the Holy Sacrament; with Prayers, Meditations, and Ejaculations, suitable to the great and solemn Occasions.*

WHen you intend to come to the Lord's Table, and partake of the Adorable Mystery, representing mystically in the Elements of Bread and Wine, his precious Body, and Blood, in remembrance of his Death, till he come again in Glory, it is highly requisite you stedfastly believe Christ was Crucified; and humble your self by a serious consideration of your manifold Sins; thinking above all, that Christ worketh in you, that which his Word did promise you; Meditating on his Passion and Resurrection, and your own rising again to a better Life to come; preparing your Soul by Prayer, and your Body by

Fasting, some time before; not running rashly, and unadvisedly, least by unworthy receiving, (as St. *Paul* saith,) *You Eat and Drink your own Damnation; not discerning the Lord's Body.*

Therefore, before you communicate, at least two or three days; Examine your Consciences, and humbly confess your Sins to God, and be heartily Sorry for the committing them; by which you have Crucified the Lord of Life afresh, and put him to an open shame; trampling the Blood of the Covenant, under foot, as an unholy thing; and bring your Body under by Fasting, or extraordinary moderate Dyet; and let your Morning, and Evening Prayers, be put up to God, to strengthen, and confirm you in a Resolution, and desire of worthy Communicating, say,

[Lord make me such a one as I ought to be; that coming to thy most Holy Sacrament, may obtain in my Heart, that Fruit which it obtaineth in the Hearts of those that worthily Communicate, &c.]

Then Consider how great a thing it is you are undertaking; even to partake of so holy a Mystery to receive him mystically, whom the Angels adore; the Prophets have desired, and the Apostles loved; the Martyrs

Imitated,

Imitated, and the Holy Men, Coveted, with unspeakable desire, to honour love, and unite them unto him by his Sacrament; and say,

[Moved with this desire, I Study to enflame my Soul more largely, by considering my ever adored Redeemer's unspeakable Love; by calling to Mind, the Manifold Graces his Sacrament bringeth with it, to the Soul of the Devout Communicant.]

When you come to Communicate, exercise your Heart, in these Contemplations; first, Call to mind your own Vileness; Secondly, cast your self with *Mary Magdalen*, at the Feet of our Lord Jesus, your Saviour, and Redeemer; and breath out short Ejaculations to Praise, and Magnifie him; for calling so poor, and so vile a Wretch as thou art, to his Divine Banquet; and say,

[Behold, O my Soul, the adorable Mystery of the Lord thy God; I love him whom thou desirest and panteſt after; account thy self happy in Receiving him, Love him, and desire him to dwell with thee, to thy endless comfort.]

Then pour out your Spirit before him, in acknowledging, and bewailing your Sins and Frailties, most fervently

desiring him, that he would pardon them all with a full purpose of amendment of Life; and then with this, or the like Prayer, keep your thoughts from wandering: Approach the Holy Table, and receive with all reverence, meekly kneeling on your Knees, the Benefits of the Sacrament, to your endless Comfort.

A Prayer before the Communion.

O God Omnipotent and most Merciful Lord, behold I, an unworthy Sinner, confessing my own vile unworthiness, humbly approach the most holy Sacrament of the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus, Mystically represented in the Elements of Bread, and Wine: I come as a Sick and Diseased Person to the Physitian; as a Leaprous Soul to be bathed, and made clean in the Fountain of Mercy, and the Stream of my Redeemer's Blood; as one that is Blind, to the Light of Eternal Brightness; as a poor Beggar to the King of Glory; as a naked Wretch, to the Lord of Heaven and Earth. I beseech thee, in the abundance of thy pity to heal mine Infirmities, to wash my foulness, to enlighten my blindness, to enrich my poverty, to cloath my naked-

nakedneſs; that I may in ſome ſort worthily receive thee, the Bread of Angels, the King of Kings, and the Lord of Lords. O grant that I may receive thee with ſuch Reſpect and Reverence, with ſuch Contrition and Fear, with ſuch Faith and Purity, with ſuch a Purpoſe, and Humility; as it is Expedient, for the health of my Soul.

O Lord and Father, give to me I beſeech thee, an unworthy Sinner, not only to receive the Sacrament, but the effectual Vertue thereof. O moſt Gracious God, grant me to receive the precious Body and Blood of thy only begotten Son; that I may be incorporated into his Myſtical Body, and be accounted as a Member of it. O Loving and moſt Mercifull Father, grant me to receive thy dearly beloved Son, and that whom I now receive as it were covered with a Veil, I may one day behold in Glory, who liveth and reigneth, with thee and the Holy Ghoſt, one God, World without end, *Amen.*

After you have Communicated in the devouteſt manner; keep your mind fixed on what you have been about, and betaking you to ſome ſecret place, ſet before God the Father, the Holy Sacrament of Chriſt our Lord, in whatever

he has suffered; alledging his merits t ballance, and weigh down your Sins and say,

[Behold, O Eternal Father, thy Son whom of thine Infinite Love thou ha sent from Heaven unto the Earth, tha he might be Incarnate, and thereb after many sharp pains and sufferings b made capable to dye for us. Behold O Father, what great things he hath done and suffered for me in the Wilderness in preaching, in fasting, in praying, in journying in persecution of the Jews, in hearing Blasphemies, in sustaining Injuries and Reproaches, in being be trayed, and suffering even death it self; behold him, O Father, on the Bloody Cross, with his hands, and feet pierced through, bowing his sacred head, and giving up the Ghost; behold the blood and water, flowing from his wounded Side, to wash away the Sins of such as faithfully believe on him, and obey his Gospel; behold the Heavens, and the Earth mourning, after their manner; and consider with what manner of Love he hath loved poor Dust and Ashes; and by all these Sufferings, take pity upon me, through his Meritorious Death and Passion; who is thy beloved Son, in whom thou art well pleased.]

Turn

Turn you now unto Christ with all thankfullness for his Benefits, and open to that holy Physitian all your Infirmities, and all your Faults, as to the most Gentle, and Compassionate Lord; open unto him all your defects, unto which you are wont to fall; desiring him to Minister a Sovereign Remedy, that you relapse not so often; and especially pray, that he would grant you Grace, that you may hereafter, recieve him more worthily; and then going Home, let the Day be spent, in Contemplations, Meditations, Prayer, Hearing or Reading God's Word, &c. and strive all you can, to Mortifie the Lusts of the Flesh; praying fervently against Temptation, and seeking all manner of occasions, to avoid offending God in word, or deed; lest being carried away by the Temptation of the Flesh, and the Allurements, and Vanities of the World, you by degrees forget, and neglect your Vows, and Promises of Amendment; and fall into a worser state than ever; provoking God to hasten over your Day of Grace; and leave you to the hardness of your Heart, and Impenitency: And therefore, to keep close with your Conscience, often repeat one or other of these short Prayers.

1. [O Lord, who art worthy of Infinite Love and Glory; I humbly repent me, that I have offended thy Divine Majesty; and fully purpose to lay down my Life, e'er I will offend thee any more.

2. Merciful and loving Lord, I execrate, and detest my Sins; I resolve to Sin no more so grievously against thee: it highly displeaseth me, O King of Glory, that I have offended thy Divine Majesty, and I repent me of my misdoing from the very bottom of my Soul.

3. I have gone astray, O infinite, and Eternal Good of my Soul; I have departed from thee; for which I repent me, and returning with the Prodigal, will depart from thee no more: Lord keep me in the right way, and in the Paths of thy Truth, that I may ever Praise, and adore thy Holy Name.]

CHAP.

CHAP VI.

Profitable Questions, and Answers, Relating to the Holy Sacrament; to Ground us in the Knowledge, of what we undertake, in approaching, &c. that adorable Mystery.

Question. FOr what cause, do you receive the Blessed Sacrament?

Answer. *First, that I may obtain, and dutifully keep Christ's most holy Institution.* Secondly, *That I may shew my Self a Member of the Body, whereof he is the Head.* Thirdly, *That I may receive this Sovereign Repast, to the Strengthning of my Faith, and the health of my Sinfull Soul.*

Q. What do you receive in the Sacrament?

A. *In a Mystical manner the very Body, and Blood of Christ my Redeemer; after a most Divine, and Heavenly way.*

Q. What Profit have you by Receiving?

A. *Encrease of Grace, and love with God and Man; and a pledge of the Eternal Inheritance, purchased for me in Heaven.*

Q. Why

Q. Why do you often Communicate?

A. *Because my hope is, I am one of God's Children; and therefore desire to come often to him, as to a loving Father.*

Q. After what manner, come you unto him?

A. *By Faith, and Repentance; having a full purpose to serve him in Holiness and Righteousness, all the Days of my Life.*

A Thanksgiving, after the Receiving the Holy Communion.

I Yield thee hearty Thanks, O my Lord *Christ Jesus*, for thine Ineffable Love; that by thy Death, thou didst redeem Mankind: I beseech thee suffer not thy Body to be broken, and thy precious Blood to be shed in vain for me; but with thy blessed Body feed my Soul, and with thy Blood quicken my Spirit; that encreasing by little and little, I may become a fit Member of thy Church, which is thy mystical Body; and Grant that I never depart from that holy League, but may continue therein, serving thee in Holiness, and Righteousness, all the days of my Life.

A Divine Meditation.

WHat couldst thou do most Mercyfull; for us, and for our Good, that thou hast not done? thou hast taken our frail Nature from us, and given us thy Divine; thou hast freely offered unto us, the Riches of thy Mercy, the Treasure of thy Grace, the abundance of thy Love; by this great inestimable and divine Sacrament; by this blessed pure and venerable Mystery, the Mystery of Peace and Piety, the Holy of Holies, the hidden Manna, whereby it is evident with what flames of Love thou didst burn; whose delight is to be with the Sons of men, the Fruit of Love is to show Mercy; and because the Fire of this Love, could be no longer hid, it must needs break out by this holy Mystery left unto us; for which, O Lord, we give unto thee as most rightly thy due, Honour, Praise Power, and Dominion, now and for ever, World without end, *Amen.*

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

Rules for the strict and holy Observation of the Lord's Day.

GOD, we see, in Compassion to our Necessities, has given us six Days to follow our lawfull Occasions; to provide us necessaries, for our support; and has reserved only one in Seven to himself; as more peculiarly sequestred to his Worship.

We then must acknowledge our selves, very ingratefull, if we do not cheerfully allow him that, who is Lord of all; when indeed it redounds altogther to our advantage if we rightly consider; for then, resting from our ordinary business, and occupations, we have more leisure to joyn together, in praising and magnifying his Holy Name, for the good things he bestows upon us, that his favours, and blessings, may be continued towards us, for our present support and eternal Comfort.

First then, let us lay aside, all manner of secular Employments, and every other thing; unless, what the needs of Nature require; and lift up our Souls unto him in the publick Congregation

gregation, and in our private Closets, and Retirements; encouraging our Servants, and those that are under us to do the like, by admonition and example; putting all Wordly business, out of our thoughts, and carrying our selves reverently, and devoutly, with due attention to his holy Word.

Secondly, Let your Prayers, Ejaculations, and Meditations, be more frequent, and earnest breathing; and panting after the everlasting Sabbath of Rest.

Thirdly, Let our Actions, Words, and Thoughts, tend to things Divine; forbearing Riot, or excess in Meats or Drinks; not so much minding the apparelling the Body, as dressing up the Soul, in Robes of Righteousness; to meet the Bridegroom, even the Lord Jesus, to whom it is to be married in the Eternal Bands of Sacred Wedlock.

Fourthly, Let us be carefull to reprove such as are careless and indifferent; and admonish them of their Duty; laying before them the hazard they run, and the displeasure they incur, in presuming to break one of the strictest Commandments in Robbing God of his peculiar Day, set a-part for his more immediate Worship.

Fifthly,

Fifthly, Begin and conclude this day in ſutable Prayer, and bleſs God's Holy Name, for ſo great an opportunity to ſerve him; not thinking the hearing of his Word tedious, nor the day too long; but have this Song of Thanksgiving in your mind. *viz.*

[We Praiſe thee O God, we acknowledge thee to be the Lord; all the Earth, doth worſhip thee the Father everlaſting; to thee all Angels Cry aloud, the Heavens, and all the Powers therein; to thee the Cherubims, and Seraphims, continually do Cry, Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of Sabbath, *&c.*]

CHAP. VIII.

How to behave our Selves, in private Faſtings, or Publick Humiliation; to implore God's Mercy, and Bleſſing; or, to turn away his Angry Judgements, from a Family, or Nation.

FAſting in it ſelf, if Conſidered without Relation to Spiritual Ends, is of no-

no great use, unless to prevent Diseases in the body, by giving the over-abundant humours, leave to consume, that oppress the Body by former Riot, or Luxury; nor is it any where enjoyned: but when it is done to a spiritual End, it serves to mortifie, and bring under the Lusts of the Flesh, and to fit us for Prayer and Meditation: moderate Fasting always rendring the Spirits more lively, quick, and apt for Devotion, by removing the gross vapours, that from meats and drinks in a full digestion, dull them, and make our Inclinations heavy, and lumpish, to the things that concern a future State; wherefore the Christian Church, hath religiously observed Fasting, before the Holy Communion; and the more devout Persons refused to take any sustenance till they had finished their Morning Devotions; and yet further, upon Days of publick Humiliation, designed for Devotion, and Prayers, to divert God's Judgments, if they were Imminent, Fasting is commanded with Prayer.

Fasting, when it is ordered to Prayer, must be total Abstinence from all meats, or, at least a very great abatement of the quantity, that your mind may be rarified, and your Intention more fixed on the things you Pray for.

Fasting, as it is Instrumental to Prayer, must

must be accompanied with other aids of the like Vertue and Efficacy, such as are for a time the removing all Worldly Cares and secular Business; and therefore our Blessed Saviour enfolds these parts with the same Caution; *viz. Take heed, least your hearts be over-charged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and the Cares of this World, and that day overtake you unawares.* To which add this: *For upon the Wings of Alms, and Fasting; Holy Prayers Infallibly ascends to Heaven.* It was *Cornelius* his Alms that made his Prayer come up as a Memorial before God.

When Fasting is intended to serve the duty of Repentance, it is then best chosen when it is short, sharp, and afflictive; for though we let our Sorrow for Sin always remain; yet we must not keep up our Anger against them, so as voluntarily to destroy our Selves by Fasting; but the main thing is, that we watch over our hearts, and be carefull that we fast from Sin; for there is no greater folly and madness in the World, then to commit that, for which I am now judging, and condemning my self: This is the best Fast, and the other may serve to promote the Interest of this by encreasing the disaffection to it, and multiplying the Arguments against it.

All Fasting, for whatever end it be undertaken,

dertaken, must be done without any Opinion of the neceſſity of the thing it ſelf, without cenſuring others, and in all humility in order to its proper End, either in publick or private; do it without making diſtorted Faces, or hanging down your heads like a Bull-ruſh, that you may be obſerved of men; but keep your Countenance as chearfull as ever.

If Faſts are ordained by Lawfull Authority to Implore God's Bleſſing upon the Kingdom or People, to help us againſt our Enemies, and proſper us with Victory, or Succeſs; or on any the like Emergencies, or neceſſary Occaſions, they are to be obſerved to the ſame Order and Purpoſe, to which they are enjoyned, and to be accompanied with Actions of the ſame nature, juſt as in private Faſts; all the difference being in the main; one we chuſe our ſelves, and the other is choſen for us by our Superiours: For an Act of Faſting, is an Act of Self-denyal; and though we do not obtain by our Faſting what we deſire; yet it is a good and commendable Act, and carries great Power, when joyned with Prayer. Our Saviour uſed it in his temptation, and tells us, *That theſe two jointly, have power to caſt out Devils*; and the *Ninevites* found the advantage of them, when they by Faſting, and

Crying

Crying mightily to Heaven, disarmed G of his Anger, and so they saved the selves from the threatned Destruc on.

When you have Fasted in compliance Authority, do not after that fall into R ot or Excess, least you lose the bene of what you have undertaken; and indee Fasting is of so excellent a use, though be not commended as a Duty, but as a Instrument, that by the Doctors of th Church, it is called, The nourishment Prayer, the restraint of Lust, the Win of the Soul, the Diet of Angels, the I strument of Humility, and Self-denya and the Purification of the Spirit; and by St. *Basil*, said to be the Mark in th Forehead, when the Angel sealed th Saints, to escape the Wrath of God, an *Baruch* 2. 5. 18. *The Soul that is greatly ve ed, which goeth stooping, and feeble, and the Ey that fail, and the hungry Soul, shall give th Praise and Righteousness, O Lord.*

CHA

CHAP. IX.

A Seasonable Examination, to know how the Frame of our Hearts are ordered in the keeping of God's Holy Commandments, and the Danger we are threatned with, for the breach of any of them, &c.

SInce Self-Examination is mainly conducing to Self Conviction, and that to a timely Repentance, let us consider in this point how we have kept, and observed God's Commandments; which ought to be the rule, and square of our Actions, in putting the following Questions to our Hearts and Consciences, and thereby trying and examining our selves,

Command. I. Hast thou been at any time so vain as to doubt of God, or of his power and providence, mercy and justice, or any of his glorious attributes?

Hast thou neglected, or refused to know him, to glorifie him, to love him, to fear him, to believe in him, and to give thanks unto him?

Hast thou in thy thoughts set up any thing in Competition with God, as Pride, or some other Darling Lust, or Interest, or

given

given his honour to another, in relying on Witch-craft, or vain Fables; if so, thou hast in thy heart despised him, and dishonored his Divine Majesty to thy ruine, without his Interposing Mercy, and thy feigned and timely Repentance?

Command. II. Hast thou in thy mind framed any bodily Shape, or given Divine adoration to Image, Saint, or Angel, or any thing in Heaven or Earth, *&c.* before him, or used in reverence before him, a careless neglect of his Worship? if so, thou hast broke this Commandment.

Command. III. Hast thou used rash Oaths, in thy ordinary Conversation, or Perjured thy self knowingly, or any way taken, or caused to be taken the Name of thy Lord thy God in vain, in provoking any to Blaspheme? if so, repent, and be sorry for this great offence.

Command. IV. Hast thou neglected the Lord's Day, or spent it in serving thy Lusts or Worldly Interests?

Hast thou been Careless in hearing the Word, and Supine to Holy Duties, in Church, and at Home; or forgetfull in calling thy self? if so, repent, that thou mayest turn away his Indignation before it fall heavy upon thee.

Command. V. Hast thou in thy Behaviour been stubborn, or irreverent unto thy

ural Parents, or hast thou despised or contemned them for their Poverty, Infirmity, or any other defect, disobeyed their Commands, or Counsels, murmured against the Jurisdiction they have over thee, refused to assist, and help them in their necessities, or to pray for them; if so, God has threatned to shorten thy days, and thou mayest expect his more heavy indignation to overtake thee?

Command. VI. Hast thou by Intemperance, and disorderly living, hastned thy own End?

Art thou Cruel, and wantest Bowels of compassion to thy poor Neighbour, or cast him into Prison, and suffered him to perish there for want, or other ill conveniencies?

Hast thou committed Murther secret or open, or wished in thy Heart the Death of thy Relations, or others? Hast thou contributed to the taking away any ones Life, by false Witness? Hast thou continued Hatred, Malice, and Revenge against thy Neighbour, or brought any through Intemperance to their Death, or attempted to lay violent hands on thy self, or rashly wished thy own Death? if so, pour out thy Soul before the Lord in tears, and entreat him to deliver thee from Blood guiltiness.

Command-

Command. VII. Hast thou carnally know any Marryed Woman?

Hast thou been given up to Lasciviou nes or Debauchery? know, that with out a sincere Repentance, no Whoremo ger, nor Adulterer, shall inherit th Kingdom of Heaven.

Command. VIII. Hast thou taken an thing by Fraud or Violence, from th Neighbour, or others? Hast thou i buying or selling, used Arts of Defraud by false weights, measures, or over reaching? Hast thou unlawfully kep back the Wages of thy Servant, or Hir ling? then art thou guilty of the breac of this Commandment.

Command. IX. Hast thou Sworn falsl against thy Neighbour, or spread fal Reports of him? Hast thou Railed an Back-bited him undeservedly? Ha thou Suborned any, to bear false Wit nes against him, or encouraged them t do it? First, Repent of it to God, and then make an acknowledgment, and restitution to your Neighbour, for the Injury that you have don him.

Command. X. Hast thou harboured thought, or any desire to hurt, or preju dice thy Neighbour? Hast thou Inor dinately at any time Lusted after what appertains to others?

Hast

Hast thou entertained Secret covetings in thy mind, with any complacency or delight in them? Then consider, that in Holy Writ, this Covetousness is called Idolatry, and is so, the breach of Two Commandments in one Hour. Our Saviour tells us, *He who breaks the least of these is guilty of the breach of the whole Law:* From which good Lord deliver us, least we entail a Curse upon our Selves and our Posterity.

CHAP. X.

The Excellency and Purity of Chastity, with Instructions how to persevere in it; with the danger, and disgrace of Lust, and Uncleanness: Also, the Virtues of Humility, and Modesty, against Pride and Ambition, &c.

1. CHastity, is the Beauty and Ornament of the Soul and Body, and is that Grace which forbids, and restrains Lust, and unlawfull desires; keeping a guard even upon the Ears and Eyes to prevent Evil getting into the Mind, to corrupt the whole Frame; and this becomes

both a Single, and Married Life, concerning which, our Duty is thus described by St. *Paul*. *For this is the Will of God, even our Sanctification; that ye should abstain from Fornication; that every one of you should know how to possess his Vessel in Sanctification and Honour; not in the lust of Concupiscence, even as the* Gentiles *that knew not God.* Thess. 5. 3. 4. 5.

Chastity is either Abstinence, or Continence; Abstinence, is that of Widows or Virgins; Continence, of Married Persons; for Chast Marriage is honourable, and pleasing to God; Widowhood pityable in its solitary Loss, but amiable and comely, when it is ordained with Gravity and Purity; not sullied with remembrances of past Licenses, nor with present desires of returning to a second Bed: But Virginity, when devoted to God's Service, when it is voluntarily chosen, in order to the Conveniencies of Religion, and Separation from Worldly Incumbrances, is the Life of Angels, the Enamel of the Soul, the huge Advantage of Religion, the great opportunity for the retirements of Devotion being empty of Cares, full of Prayers, and unmingled Intrusion? But this Chastity, must be Imprinted in the Mind, as well as keeping the Body from actual defilement; for if the Mind be infected

ded with lascivious thoughts and desires, then there is a yielding to Lust, and no Victory obtained, no Self-denyal, but a proneness to Temptation, if opportunity offered; since the Sin is already committed in the Heart, therefore such as resolve upon this Vertue, must refrain evil Company, or any thing, which by seeing, or hearing, may Minister to their being seduced, and drawn away; and to prevent danger, those that have not the Gift of Continency are by St. *Paul* recommended to a Marriage State: And indeed, some Married Persons, do in their Marriage show great Examples of Piety and Vertue, exceeding many Virgins, in their State of Virginity; in Conjugal Affection, in preserving their Faith unbroken, by Educating their Children in the Fear of God, by Patience, and Contentedness, and holy thoughts, and the exercise of Vertues proper to that State: However, Married Persons, Virgins, and Widows, are the Servants of God, so long as they do well, and live within the restraints and Laws of their Particular Estates, Chastly, Temperately, Justly, and Religiously; when those that give themselves up to Lust, and Debauchery, run a hazard to destroy their Souls and Bodies; waste their Estates, and live despi-

sed, contemned, and scorned; to converse with Diseases, and Misery in this Life; and without sincere Repentance, and God's great Mercy, come to the worst of all Miseries hereafter; for as here, Like the Men of *Sodom*, they were enflamed with filthy Lust; so in their final Doom, they shall roul with howling Dæmons, in Beds of Grizly Fire.

2. Humility is the next great Ornament and Jewel of the Christian Religion: *Learn of me*, says our Saviour, *for I am Meek and Humble, and you shall find Rest unto your Souls.* This is the great Bulwark, against the Monstrous Sin of Pride, that draws after it a Multitude of Sins; for if we rightly consider Humility, and Modesty, in all Affairs, is our proper Centre. Since we were taken from the humble dust, and must lye down in it again, and there be a Companion for Worms, and Corruption, till we Moulder into Ashes, let us then consider what the Proud, Scornfull, and Ambitious have to boast on.

Their Strength is Inferiour to many Beasts, their Beauty to many Flowers, their Learning the greatest Ignorance in the World, when it teaches Pride; for true Learning teaches Humility, as the

the chiefest Vertue attending it. Their Riches are Inferiour to a Golden Mine; and is at the best, but refined Earth: If any be Proud of his Birth, that is the Blessing of others, and not his own. But contrary to these, Humility Boasts not, Envys not, Reviles not, Loves to be Concealed, and little Esteemed; is content, to want Praise, shuns Vain-glory; and loves to speak little; unless, it hears God Blasphemed, and Holy things Ridiculed, or Trampled on; and then it opens its Mouth, not with Railing, but Gentle, and Convincing Reproof; so that it makes the Humble and Modest Party Esteemed even by those that have no regard to God or Goodness.

CHAP. XI.

Holy Meditations, on God's Mercy, and Goodness, towards Mankind; with desires of Grace, and Mercy, for a serious Repentance; with a short Ejaculation.

WHat am I but Dust and Ashes, a poor helpless Creature, framed out of nothing; and yet what a Graci-

ous God have I! for although, I can add nothing to his Bleſſedneſs and Glory, yet, as if I had mightily obliged him, or he could not be without me, he ſtill follows me with Favours and Bleſſings, he loads with the Bounties of his Love; and, except his Angels, has placed me in a Station far above other Creatures, and made them Subſervient to my uſe and command; he has moreover given me an underſtanding Will and Memory, a Body Vigorous and Active, fit for Employments, of various kinds; and therefore, as I made not my ſelf, nor had theſe Endowments, but from God my Maker; there is all the reaſon in the World, that I ſhould return him the ſinceereſt Acknowledgments I can in reſigning my Soul, Will and Affection, to be governed and guided by him, and to be at his diſpoſal: *Moſes* tells me, *We were Created, that we ſhould be a Holy People, to ſerve our God, and for this End, we were Redeemed*, Luke 1. 74, 75. *to ſerve God in Holineſs, and Righteouſneſs, all the days of our Life.* Therefore let me not trifle away the bleſſed Moments, allowed to raiſe me yet to a higher ſtate of Happineſs, and to reſcue me from the Bondage, and Slavery, to which by Nature I am enthrall'd: But let me conſider the pretiouſneſs of an Immortal Soul, to ſave which

which, that it may be glorified, is the end of my coming into the World; let then no difficulties, or dangers, hinder me from Travelling through the Wilderness of this World, to the Heavenly, and Holy *Jerusalem*; let all the glittering Pomps, and seeming Glories of this World, be to my Soul, as dross and dung; and let it relish nothing as sweet, and savoury, but those things that tend to its Peace and Joy, leading it to the Arms of its Blessed Redeemer.

The Ejaculation.

LOrd what is Man, or the Son of Man that thou art thus mindfull of him! thou hast made him, but a little lower than the Angles, and given him dominion over the Creatures thou hast made; what Praise, what Adoration then should he give thee, for all thy Mercies and Favours? O my Soul, raise thy self on the Wings of holy Desire, and mount up Songs of Joy, and Triumph, to Hymn his Divine Majesty with everlasting Melody, of Praise and Thanksgiving.

CHAP. XII.

A Holy Meditation, on God's Favours to Mankind, and the Rewards layed up for the Righteous; with loving desires of Repentance, and amendment of Life, &c.

WHere e'er I cast my Eyes, the Glorious Workmanship of the great Work-master, appears lovely, and charming; the Creation supported by his Power, holds its Order, and Harmony; and all Irrational Creatures, and even Insensitive things, serve to the ends they were made: Ah! why should Man then, the noblest Creature, formed by mature deliberation, and placed as Lord over all Inferiour Beings, basely start aside, and resist the Will of his Maker, when he Wills nothing but for his good! Why should he foolishly spend his time, destroy his health, and waste what should moderately support him, in the pursuit of sordid Lust! Why does he grasp dirt for Silver, and Mire for Gold, when the Riches of the Kingdom of Heaven, are held out to us upon easie terms! Am I desirous of a Kingdom? there is one promised that shall have no end. Is a

Crown

Crown my Ambition? there is a Crown of Glory. Would I have a Scepter, there is the Scepter of Righteousness? Would I gratifie my my appetite? there is Water of Life, and hidden Manna, Angels Food, and Repast. Would I have the Conversation of a true Friend? there is the Lord Jesus who layed down his Life to save me from Everlasting destruction; covering me in his bleeding wounds, from his incensed Father's Wrath, and just Indignation. Would I have good Company? there I may enjoy the Fellowship of Saints and Angels, Patriarchs, Apostles, and Martyrs, and all holy men departed this Life in the true faith and fear of God, in Jesus Christ: And shall I neglect so great a Salvation, and slight so many Opportunities, and so many good Motions of the Spirit? O no! but let me shake off this sloath, and fly Temptations, that will hinder me from running the Race that will win me these things, or turn me aside into crooked Paths, where I shall not only lose them, but my self to all Eternity: O let a Sense of Gratitude to my God, rouse me up, and carry me away with a Zeal to serve him that has done so much for me; by whom I am wonderfully, and fearfully Made; who poured me out as Milk,

and curdled me as Cheese; brought me from my Mothers Womb, and sustained me by a Hand of Providence through the whole course of my days, giving me Knowledge of himself, and his ways, and of saving Health, and of Life Eternal; and though for all this I have offended, and grieved him; let me never willingly do it more.

The Ejaculation.

O Lord call to remembrance, thy tender Mercies, and thy loving Kindness, which have been ever of old! O remember not the Sins, and Offences of my Youth, nor of my riper years! O deal not with me after my Sins, neither Reward me after my Iniquities; but according to thy Mercies, think upon me, O Lord, and let the light of thy Countenance shine upon my Soul, to guide it: This dark Red Sea of Evils, which encompass me as a Wall on the right Hand, and the left, threatning each moment to overwhelm me; do this O my mercifull Creator, that I may Praise thee, in the Land of the Living; and tell of the Wonders thou hast done for me, *Amen.*

CHAP.

CHAP. XIII.

A Serious Meditation, on our Sinfull State; and how displeasing Sin is to Almighty God; with the Danger of continuing in it: Exhorting to Repentance; with a discovery of the deformities of Vice, and the beauties of Virtue, &c.

WHen I seriously Consider with my self that God, from whom I recieve all good things, is a hater of Sin, and at Enmity with it, even to his holding all the Workers of Iniquity in Abomination, and that he will not they should take his name into their Lips; when they design to go on in a sinfull Course, and hate to be reformed; when I consider all this, how can I but tremble with fear, least I should be one of them, that having carelesly, vainly, and sinfully past away my Days, and Years, without so much as a serious Enquiry into my Life, and how I might give an account unto my God, and when he hath called unto me, and invited me, by any of his

his Gracious Methods to Good, I have rather yielded to the vain and sinfull Complacencies, of my enticing Companions, chooſing to hearken to them, rather than to the Invitations of the Holy Spirit: Even ſince, I have more Solemnly dedicated my ſelf to his Service, and have had the paths of Piety ſmoothed and plained out before me, having a Guide to inſtruct me, in the ways of his Commandments; yet I ſtill feel a chillneſs within me to that which is good, like a ſqueezy Stomach, Reliſhing naught but Worldly traſh, inſtead of ſubſtantial Food of Life; being deſirous to draw back, after I have put my hand to the Plough, though God has expreſly ſaid, his Soul ſhall have no pleaſure in ſuch, or fooliſhly excuſing Sin, and robing it in Garments of Fancy, that it may appear without deformity; calling Pride Gentility; Gluttony and Exceſs, an Enjoyment of the Creature; Revenge, Courage; Laſciviouſneſs, the Frailty of Youth, or the dictates of Nature, that furniſhes us with ſuch Deſires; and with ſuch Artifices, gilding over many other Enormities, whilſt my ſelf am tempted, and drawn away of my own Luſts: What can I then expect, but the Frowns of Heaven, and in the end, without Repentance, the Torments of Hell.

Let

Let me then, whilst I have my Day of Life, divorse Sin from me, and hate it mortally, because it is an Enemy to God; and embrace the divine Vertues, that are in themselves Aimable, and Delightfull, conducing to the Health and Wellfare of the Body; a good Name on Earth, and the Everlasting Wellfare of the Soul, and Body hereafter; and these are Humility, Temperance, Chastity, Charity, Fasting, Love, Obedience, and a Hearty resigning our selves in all things to the Will of God; these are the things that belong to our Peace, and will make us chearfull, healthfull, and Esteemed of all good Men, and give us length of days: when on the contrary, Pride, Anger, and Revenge, waste the Spirits, and sets the Soul and Body, in a disorderly, and self-tormenting Flame; Intemperance, turns to Fevers, Surfeits, and other afflicting Diseases; Uncleanness, to Ulcers, Consumptions, Disgrace, and untimely Death; and all manner of Sins, are as so many Arrows bent to our destruction: Let us then, represent with the Eyes of Reason, and Judgment, Virtue in its true Beauty, and Loveliness, and Vice unveil'd in its true deformity; and then we shall, no doubt, love and pursue the one, and eschew and hate the other,

other; which God of his Mercy grant for the Health of our Bodies, and Salvation of our Souls, *Amen.*

CHAP. XIV.

Considerations on the shortness, and uncertainty of Man's Life, and Preparations to a Holy Dying; with the danger of putting off Repentance to Old Age, or a Death-bed Sickness, &c.

IT is the Saying of a very Learned and Pious Father, *That he that would dy well, must allways be looking for Death, every Day knocking at the Gates of the Grave, and then the Gates of the Grave, shall never prevail upon him to his hurt*; for Life is a brittle Glass, that many times unexpectedly is broken various ways, and may be Emblemed, from the Womb to the Grave, by a Rose springing from the Clefts of its vernant Hood, first Fair as the Morning, and full with the Dew of Heaven, as the Lambs fleece; but when a ruder breath of Air, has forced upon its Virgin Modesty, and spread abroad its Fragrant folds, dismounting its

its too youthfull and unripe Retirements, it begins to put on Darkneſs, and decline to Softneſs, and the Symptoms of a ſickly Age, it bows the Head, and at Night, having ſcattered ſome of its Leaves, the Morrows Sun withers the reſt, ſo that they drop into a Bed of Weeds, and there are loſt; it is not Youth, nor Strength, that can give us any aſſurance of long Life; many Brides have dyed in their dreſſing to their Nuptials, and the expected Joy has turned to Funeral Mourning, and ſome have been Praying, and giving Thanks for a proſperous return to their own Houſe, and unexpectedly the roof has deſcended upon their Heads, and turned their loud Religion into the deeper ſilence of the Grave; how many teeming Mothers have rejoyced over their ſwelling Wombs and pleaſed themſelves in becoming the Channels of Bleſſing to a Family, when the Midwife hath quickly bound their Heads and Feet, and they have been carried forth to untimely Burial; and often the Birth-day of an Heir, hath ſeen the Coffin of his Father brought into the Houſe, and Joy, and Mourning, has been ſtrangely mingled.

If we would have our Lives lengthned, let us then begin betimes to live

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in the Account of Reason and Sober Councils of Religion, and then we shall have no great Reason to complain, that our abode on Earth is so short; but when we spend in waste what God hath given us in plenty, when we Sacrifice our Youth to Folly, our Manhood to Lust and Rage, our Old Age to Covetousness and Irreligion, not beginning to Live till we are to Dye, designing that time to Virtue, which indeed is Infirm to every thing, then we make our Lives run short, and Lust runs away with all the Vigorous Healthfull part of it, and Pride and Animosity, steal the Manly Portion, and Craftiness, and Interest possess Old Age.

If our Childhood, being first consecrated, by a forward Baptism, be seconded by a holy Education, and a complying Obedience; if our Youth be Chaste, and Temperate, Modest, and Industrious, proceeding through a Religious, and Sober Manhood, to a Religious Old Age; then we have lived our whole duration, and shall never Dye, but be changed into a just time, to the preparations of a better, and an immortal Life.

It is a great Temptation wherewith the Devil assaults us, to put off our Repentance from time to time; saying, Yet it

it is not easie, yet not convenient, and so, from one day to another, we defer the main end, for which we were born by hearkning, and listening to the Flatteries of the Destroyer, when we know not what a Day may bring forth; or should we live to Old Age, it is a Question, whether our Custome of Sin has not provoked God to take away from us the Will and Power to Repent, and and to suffer habitual Vice, to grow too strong for us; or can we reasonably think, that when we have spent the Strength, and Flower of our Days, in the Service of Sin, and Satan; God who has done so much for us, will be content with the dregs of time, or a Sick-Bed Repentance, in our giving over to Sin, when Sin is no more pleasant to us, or Age or Infirmity, takes away our power to pursue our Vices; when grey Hairs, trembling Joints, dim Eyes, short Breathings, wrinkled Skins, loss of Memory, and decay of Appetite, overtake us, and make us a burthen to our selves, when our Night of Death and Darkness, is coming on; can we then think it a fit time to set out to run the great Race, at the end of which is the reward of Glory, which required all the Days of Life, and Strength to perform; or can we suppose our selves

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to ſtand on ſuch Conditions with God, ſ
wards whoſe Service we have done n
thing of note; that he will be pleaſ
with a few Sighs, and Tears, faint Pr
ers, Diſtracted by the violent Pains
a Diſeaſe, the Weeping, or Importu
ty of Friends, in Condoling you,
Admoniſhing you, to ſettle your Affai
minding more their own Intereſt, t
the Welfare of your Soul, and thoug
at theſe times, we dare not limit Go
Mercies, who are over all the Works
his Creation, and frequently ſtop t
hand of Juſtice, when about to ſtrike t
blow; yet it may, if we conſider Impar
ally, ſeem unreaſonable to our ſelv
that ſo exceeding a Reward as Eter
Life, and with that, thoſe Joys that a
beyond the utterance of me, or A
gels, ſhould be given us, for a kind
a forced, and imperfect Repentance
Let me be plain with you then, and t
you by this trifling, you run an extrao
dinary hazard of loſing thoſe Souls
and that in endleſs Woe, to a
Eternity, that are abundantly mo
Valuable than all the Glories of t
Earth.

If when we have done all we ca
we muſt ſtile our Selves unprofitabl
Servants; what muſt we be accou
ted when we have loytered awa
ou

ur time, and done nothing to the pur-
ose? O be up, and doing then whilst
it is yet early, that at what Hour soe-
er the Lord cometh, he may find you
well employed, and then he shall give
his great Reward unto thee Willingly,
as unto a good and faithfull Servant: For
he that would dye well, must all the
days of his Life lay up against the day
of Death, not only by the general Pro-
visions of Holiness, and a Pious Life in-
definitely, but Provisions proper to the
necessities of that great Day of Ex-
pence, in which a Man, is to throw his
last Cast, for an Eternity of Joy, or
Sorrow; ever remembring that this a-
lone, well performed, is not enough
to pass us into Paradice; but that alone
done Foolishly, is enough to send us to
the Regions of Woe, and the want of
either a Holy Life or Death makes a
Man fall short of the mighty price of his
high Calling.

Another serious Meditation, on the danger of a Sinfull Course of Life and delay of Repentance.

LOrd, considering the uncertainty of my Days, Why do I delay to turn unto thee? Why do I put off from day to day? Why is not to day that I hear thy Voice? Why am I ensnared and bewitched, by the bad Examples of others? What can I expect in the end but these fond Devices, wherewith I have Flattered my self, shall vanish like a Dream, and be turned to Lamentations? for I know God will not be mocked, who is of purer Eyes, then to behold Iniquity, with approbation, or connivance, but will ask a severe Account of me, as we sadly read, and find he has done of others: Therefore, whilst it is is to day, let me seriously, and stedfastly resolve to close with him, to hate Sin, because, it is an Enemy to God, and Hated by him, and came into the World by the Fraud, and Malice of the Devil, to undoe our Souls. Let me now be Watchfull over my ways, and by God's assistance spend my remaining Days so carefully, as not willingly to commit any thing knowingly Sinfull, wherein

wherein I may offend my Gracious God.

Ejaculation, or Prayer.

O Lord give me Grace to make haſt, and not to prolong the time, to keep thy Commandments; that I may call my own ways to Remembrance, and turn my Feet to thy Teſtimonies. O Bleſſed Father, purge me with the Blood of thy dear Son, that my Sins may be done away; and then will I Praiſe thee, becauſe of thy Righteous Judgments: O Lord my Strength, and my Redeemer, *Amen.*

CHAP. XV.

A ſerious Meditation, on Death and Eternity.

LOrd give me a ſerious Conſideration of my latter end; Teach me to Number my Days, that I may apply my Heart to Wiſdom, before I go hence

hence, and be no more seen; though Death is sure, the Day of Death is uncertain, and the ways that lead to the Chambers of Darkness, and the Grave Innumerable, and Various, by Diseases, by Fire, by Water, by Sword, by Famine, by a Fall, or the fall of a Tile, or a Stone, by venemous Creatures, by too much Heat, or too much Cold, and the like; we are snatched away, some sooner, and some later: These I say, and many more, are as so many Doors, to let the Soul, out of its Mansions of Clay, unto vast and amazing Eternity, boundless, and endless, as God himself, and suppose I could evade all Accidents, and Casualties, yet every Moment that slips away, winds off my Life, nearer and nearer to the Grave, and the Elements whereof my mortal Body is composed, are by their jarring, Conspiring to betray the feeble Forts of Life, into the hands of the King of Terrors; and indeed, if by reason of Temperance, in Meats, Drink, and Recreations, I have a Healthfull Constitution, and live to extream Old Age, so that my Days prove Labour, and Sorrow, and I become a burthen to my self, yet even then, my my Sun will set, my day will have a close, and I must drop into the Grave, and pass beyond the Account of time,

as

as if I had lived but a few Moments. These Considerations made the Wise, and Holy Men be always preparing for their latter ends, comparing this Life, to things of the shorteſt Moment, as a shadow, grass, the flower that fadeth, a bubble, a span, and St. *James* compareth it to a Vapour, and when, though after the longeſt Life, Death has layed his Icey Hands on me, my Friends, and Kindred, will fly from me, and in a short time forget me, as if I had never been, or at leaſt think no more of me, than I do of thoſe I now Survive; then my Body falls to Duſt, and is mingled with its own Ruins, reduced by Worms and Corruption, to its Orignal Attoms; but then it is what Care I have taken, for the dreſſing my pretious and immortal Soul, will appear; if it has no Wedding Garment on, in the Regions of Eternity, it will find but ſad and deplorable Entertainment, it will be altogether Speechleſs, and unable to Anſwer for the many Sins of Omiſſion, and Commiſſion, and other Enormities, when the King ſhall come in to view the Gueſt, guilt, horror, and trembling, will wither all its Courage, nor ſhall it be able to flee from the preſence of the Judge. O then, before I paſs the Gates of Death, which can never be repaſſed,

let

let me prepare and provide, with all m
power and strength, for so great a Jo
ney, at the end of which stands my r
ward or punishment; let the though
of Death prepare me for it; let me
vigilant, and serious, in so great a co
cern; let me think the ghastly King
Terror stands before me, ready to gi
the fatal blow, and those that he h
lead Captive to his gloomy Kingdo
call to me from their Beds of darkn
to follow them: Let me then dress m
Soul in the Robes of Christ's Righteou
ness, that though Death leave me wi
the common Fate of all Men, I m
be freed from the dominion of Sin; l
me then I say be vigilant, that m
Oyl of Faith and good Works be b
ning in my Lamp, all the days of m
Expectation; till this great change come
when I am to wait on the Bridegroo
in his Chamber of the new *Jerusalem*
that so I may be received as a we
come Guest; which grant I beseech the
O Lord, for thy dear Mercy's sak
Amen.

Ejac

Ejaculation, or Prayer.

HEar my Prayer O Lord, and consider my desires, hearken unto me for thy Truth, and Righteousness sake: Enter not into Judgment with thy Servant, for in thy sight, shall no Man living be justified; for the Enemy hath smitten my Soul, he hath smitten my Life down to the Ground, he hath layed me in Darkness, as the Men that have been long Dead: O let me hear thy loving kindness, betimes in the Morning, for in thee is my Trust: quicken me, O Lord, for thy Name sake, and for thy Righteousness sake, bring my Soul out of Trouble *Amen.*

CHAP XV.

Considerations on our Dying, and coming to Judgment; with the Terror of the great Day to the Wicked, and Joy to the Righteous.

WHen Death has struck off the Chains of Mortality, that clogged and fettered the Soul to its Earthly Tabernacle, then the World ends with us, as effectually, as if its final Dissolution was come; for as Death delivers us up, so we pass to Judgment, naked, and stripped, of our Worldly Pomp, and Grandeur, without the attendance of Friends, and Relations, to speak on our behalf; and when we come before the tremendious Tribunal of the great Judge, there both I, and all, shall find the Book which shall be opened, and out of which I shall be Judged, shall be the evidence of my Deeds, and Actions, in this Life recorded, in the Testimony of my own Conscience, and in the infallible Memory of God's unsearchable

searchable Wisdom, against which, I can have no Plea, nor Bar; my self shall Condemn my self, by not being able to gainsay what is lay'd to my Charge; all the Errors and Offences of my Life, shall stand crouding before me, in their terrible deformities, if they are not blotted out by sinceer Repentance, in this Life, with great Contrition, and Floods of penitential Tears, and above, by Christ's Mediation, and Intercession; but however, my Lot shall fall, either for Woe, or Joy, there is no Appeal from this Bar, here my particular Reward, or Punishment, will be assigned and pronounced; then will the Soul pass to the place appointed, there to remain till the great, and terrible day of the Lord, when in the Morning of the Resurrection it shall re-enter the drousie Body, starting out of Attoms, and leaving its long recumbancy, at the sound of the Trumpet, where together they shall be caught up to meet the Lord, coming in Glory and Majesty, in the Clouds of Heaven, as Judge, and final Determinator; then shall Joy, and Sorrow, spread their Pavillions in the Regions of Souls, the Righteous shall exceedingly rejoyce, with Songs of Triumph, for the coming of the Lord, and the appearance of his Kingdom, but the

Wicked shall fear and tremble exceedingly, for the Pains and Miseries, the Woes, and Lamentations, they are like to undergoe in the Regions of perpetual night, where they are to dwell with the everlasting Burnings; and is it thus, O my Soul, that one day I must undergoe so strict a Scrutiny? and wilt thou not be preparing to cast up thy Accounts, and reckoning of thy Traffick and Stewardship, in this World, since upon that depends whatever thou canst expect of Good, when God calls upon thee, by his Word, by his Ministers, and excites thee by many other Motives, to do it effectual? therefore whilst it is to day, hear his Voicce, least he grow angry, and give thee not time, or at least, suffer thy day of Grace to run out, and thou art lost in the perverseness of thy ways, to all Eternity: Which God of his Infinite Mercy prevent, for the sake and Merit, of his only beloved Son, *Jesus Christ*, who is our Redeemer, our Advocate, and our Judge.

Ejaculation,

Ejaculation, or Prayer.

THe Sacrifice of God is a Broken Heart; a Broken, and Contrite Heart, O God thou wilt not despise; Hide thy Face from my Sins, and blot out my Iniquities; Create in me a a clean heart, O God, and renew a right Spirit within me, that I may Sing aloud of thy Righteousness, and stand before thee, with joy and gladness, in the last day, to praise thee, in the highest Heaven, World without End, *Amen.*

CHAP XVI.

Serious, and Melancholy, Reflections on the Torments of Hell; and the Woes, and Miseries, of those that are doomed to Eternal Flames, &c.

NOw my Soul, prepare with Trembling to take a view of a Scene of Horror and amazing Woe, into which obstinate, unthinking, and unadvised Wretches have plunged themselves; stand upon the brink of Eternity, and cast your Eyes upon that Flaming Sea, whose Billows roul in deluges of liquid Fire, those torrents of burning yet unconsuming Sulphur, wherein Ten thousand Millions of Souls and Bodies lye weltering, never to be released from those everlasting burnings, where there is weeping, wailing, gnashing of teeth, no light, but to shew them their misery, and the misery of those they have by their Incitements, and bad Examples, brought into those Regions of Woe; where their Company consists of ugly upbraiding Fiends, and damned Spirits, who

who wish in vain to die, or be turned to nothing; but Death flys them, and their Wishes must remain unanswered, for endless millions of Ages, and then be as far off as when they begun: Could they have but any hope of Ease, or Release, though never so distant, it would be some Comfort and Allay to their Torments; but all hopes are banished, as they are banished from God, and his presence for ever; which sence of loss, is not the least part of their Pain, and may be reckoned the chiefest, seeing they might have had Immortal Glory, and Joy, instead of Eternal Horror and Woe: Had they spent their time well, or delivered up that Talent with Interest, which they either trifled away or hid in a Napkin: for the more good a thing it is, the greater is the pain, and grief in losing it. Therefore seeing God is infinitely good, not only comprehending, but exceeding the perfections of all things, and therewith also, the last ends of our desires, and the perfect rest of a reasonable Soul; it therefore followeth, that all the other torments of Hell do not so much afflict the Soul as to be deprived of such essential goodness for ever, by their own rashness, and follies; and this pain of loss, can be no more comprehen-

ded by Mortal Men, then for us to conceive how excellent and glorious the sight of God is, though we may well guess, that innumerable Hells are more tollerable, then to be deprived of the Glory of Heaven, then to be hated of the Lord Jesus, then to have him turn away his mild, and quiet Countenance, then to have him shut his Amiable Eyes, then to have him say unto us, *Depart from me, I know you not.*

O sweet Saviour, let me not, I beseech thee, to taste of these Torments, suffer not my secure Soul, lightly to esteem it; at least suffer me not to run violently to this danger, but restrain me with thy Grace, and draw me back with the Cords of thy Love; for so much as thy glory, and beauty exceedeth the baseness, and deformity of Hell, so much is the torment greater to be deprived of thee, then to be possessed of the other.

The Holy Scripture, has represented the torments of Hell, under many frightfull Ideas; as the Worm which never dyeth, unquenchable Fire, utter Darkness, &c. and indeed, it may be said to be the torment of death, without any end of life, and that God hath taken away both from life, and from death, all which is good, and mixed the residue together

together in his Cup of Wrath where-with to temper the torments of Hell: Upon these dreadfull Considerations, let every one reflect with himself, *viz.* Is this O Lord, the Wages of Sin? is this the punishment of the Wicked, of whom I am one, in so deep a degree? and is it a Marvel then, that I tremble exceedingly, and fail like one in a Storm, before thy divine Majesty? if my Conscience quake, if my Soul rend with Sighs, and my Eyes are drowned in Tears? and thus humbly expostulate with our Maker.

O Mercifull Lord, do not so look upon me, that thou see not thy self; regard not so my Wickedness, that behold not thy own goodness; remember not so the Sins that I have done, that thou forgettest the Substance thou hast made! What, O Lord, is the Sense of this saying, *viz.* I will not the death of a Sinner, but I desire that he be converted and live? [*is this*] I will not the death of a Sinner, if thou rejectest a sinfull Soul, if thou plungest it in Hell, when it crys unto thee for Mercy. O gracious God, whose Word is a Will and whose Will is Power, who dost promise nothing, but what thou doest purpose, and purposest nothing, but what thou art able to perform, suffer

me I pray thee to speak with thy Mercy, who am but dust, and ashes, Lord, if thou wilt not the death of a Sinner, What necessity is there, that I should Perish, if thou desirest, that a Sinner should be converted and live? What difficulty is there, that I should not be saved? Can the power, and mallice of the Devil? Can the number and enormity of my Offences, either constrain that which thou wouldest not, or hinder that which thou desirest? No, the Devils tremble at thy mighty Majesty; and if my Sins were far more in number, they cannot hold in the Ballance with thy Mercy; for by how much thou art greater than man, so much are my Offences inferiour to thy goodness; remember not then thy justice, and my deserts, but remember thy mercies, and my miseries; think not upon thy hate towards Offenders, but think upon thy love towards thy Creatures, and look upon me, with eyes of thy pity, for whom a ransom of thy well-beloved Son's rich redeeming blood has been payed, and snatch me like a Brand, out of these eternal Flames, for his merits, and thy own dear mercy's sake.

CHAP.

CHAP. XVII.

The Joys of Heaven, Lively set forth; with the exceeding great Rewards of Glory, layed up and reserved, for those that serve the' Lord, and walk uprightly in his ways.

HOw beautifull are the Feet of those that bring the glad Tyding of Peace; and how comfortable after a Storm is a safe Harbour to a weather-beaten Mariner, who every moment expected to find his Tomb, in the closing of a yawning Wave; so is it after the Trouble Afflictions, and Anxieties, of those that are tossed in this World, as in a perpetual Storm, when they arrive at the quiet Haven of Eternal rest, there he may safely look upon the dangers he has escaped, and smile upon the difficulties he has overcome, he may there triumph over affliction, and look upon adversity with pleasure; all Tears shall be then wip'd away, there shall be no more sorrow, nor mourning, but joy and gladness, shall put them to silence; the joy of the Righteous shall be

be as St. *Paul* averreth, That after this wearisome Life is ended, they shall see God face to face; and St. *John* tells us, that they shall see him as he is, that is, in all his Excellencies and Glories, in the Perfection of his Goodness, and admire the Wonders of his free Grace and Mercies towards his unworthy Creatures. If it was a Pleasure to *Abraham*, when God said unto him, *Lift up thine Eyes and look from the place where thou art, for all the Land that thou seest will I give unto thee*, Gen. 13. 14, 15. what greater Pleasure will it be, to lift up our Eyes in the Heavenly *Canaan*, and to Contemplate the Beauty and Majesty of those eternal Habitations made without hands in the highest Heavens, where Pleasures that fade not, are prepared for glorified Bodies and Souls? The great Babylonian King was puffed up with the Magnificence of his earthly Building, which no doubt, was as Magnificent as Art and Treasure could render, insomuch, that he cryed out, *Is not this great* Babel *which I have built for the house of the Kingdom, and for the Honour of my Majesty*! how much more shall the righteous man be exalted, when he enters the holy and heavenly *Jerusalem*, which shineth with Glory as clear as Chrystal, whose

Buildings

Buildings are of pure Gold like glistering Glass, whose Walls and Foundations are precious Stones, and whose Gates are entire Pearls, whose Streets are paved with pure Gold, *&c. Apocal.* 21. 22. *&c.* The Consideration of this transcendant Beauty and Statelinesse made holy *David* cry out as in a Rapture: *O how Amiable are thy Dwellings thou Lord of hosts! my Soul longeth and panteth to enter into thy Courts*, *Psal.* 84. 1, 2. There we shall not only have God himself, who is the Fountain of all Blessings to sustain us, but our Company shall be Saints and Angels, and the whole Quire of blessed Spirits Antheming the Throne of their Maker and Preserver, with Hallelujahs, saying, *Blessing and Honour, and Glory and Power, be unto him that sitteth on the Throne, and unto the Lamb that liveth for ever and ever*, and as they rejoyced at thy Conversion, shall they triumph at thy Coronation and Glorification; then shall thy Joy be full, thy Tears shall be wiped away, and thy Sorrows be remembred no more; thou shalt be clad in the white Robe of Christ's Righteousnesse, and it shall for thy Credit and Honour be said unto thee, *Well done, thou good and faithful Servant*, &c. thy sins shall be

be cast into perpetual Oblivion, and thy Alms, Deeds, Prayers, Fasting, Constancy, Patience, Perseverance, and the good Actions of thy Life shall appear in Characters of Gold, and remain as a perpetual Memorial of thy Well-doing, and smell sweet in the Nostrils of the Almighty, who will lead thee, and feed thee by the Fountains, and Rivers of Life; so that the Soul, whose Lot it is to enter into this Kingdom, shall be wholly satisfied with unspeakable Pleasures; every Part, and every Sense shall be in a manner Enebriated, not Momentary but Eternal, exceeding earthly Pleasures so far in Plenty as they do in Place, for as the Princely Prophets says, *Psal.* 36. 8. it shall be satisfied with abundance of God's house, and he shall give it drink of his Pleasure, as out of a River; and over and above it shall be Crowned with Immortality, whereby it shall be assured, never to be dissolved, never to be declined, but to endure so long as Almighty God himself shall endure; and that is, from everlasting to everlasting; for he that causeth the Heavens to continue so many Thousand years after they were Created, shall also cause the Bodies of Saints always to flourish, even as the

Wise

wise man saith, *The Just shall live for ever*; and this may bring us to a Contemplation of Divine Goodness, in these or the like Terms.

O thou lover of Man! O! thou that loves Man in sin, though thou lovest not sin in Man, what shall we say unto thee, that of thine infinite Goodness shouldest thus raise us from the dust and pollution, to an Inheritance incorruptible; but with the Princely Prophet confess, *If the Lord had not helped me, it had not failed but that my Soul had been put to silence*, *Psal.* 94. 17. and how sweet a Sound will this be, when it shall be said, when you are almost at the end of the Race in this Life, Look up because thy Redemption draweth near; and more, when the Companies of Saints shall meet thee with Congratulations of Joy, for thy Deliverance from trouble and sorrow, and the Voice of thy Spouse shall say, *Arise my fair one and come away, for behold the Winter is past, the showers are over, and the Flowers have appeared in our Land.* What would not some men do to possess a small corner of Earth? through what Seas of Blood would they not wade for a Kingdom, even at the hazard of their Lives and Fortune, tho'

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to Reign but a short time, and perhaps trouble and anxiety? How much more should a Christian do for a Kingdom like this? Where he shall Reign for ever with Christ, in Glory as King and Priest. A small Glimpse of the Joys of this heavenly Kingdom, made St. Paul weary of all the Kingdoms of the Earth and earnestly desire to be with Christ for there we shall be adorned with the brightest Beauty, as the Wise man testifies, *viz. in the time of their Visitation they shall shine*; *Moses* saw God but imperfectly and a small time, and his Face took an Impression of the Divine Glory, that the People were dazled with the Brightness of his Countenance; what an Impression of Brightness then shall they receive, who are found worthy to see his Face for ever? and this Glory our Saviour somewhat describes in *Mat.* 13. when he says, *The just shall shine as the Sun in the Kingdom of their Father.*

In this blessed Kingdom, there shall be no sickness or sorrow, *for the Health of the Righteous*, as the Psalmist says, *is from the Lord*; the Veil is now spread indeed between these Joys and us, and we have but a dark Prospect of them; but if we persevere in righteousness, the holy Angels when we dye will

will take care to convey us to those blessed Mansions, and drive away the wicked Spirits that watch to intercept our way, and would willingly turn us aside to their Houses of Sorrow and woe; but the Souls of good Men thus Guarded, shall pass on in Triumph, and scorn their feeble Malice, who cannot injure them, because Christ hath answered for them, crossed their sins out of the Scrole of Death, and Registred their Names in the Book of Life. Then shall the Saints come forth to meet them in Robes of Righteousness, with triumphal Songs, and Conduct them to the Throne of him that liveth for ever, who shall give them the Welcome of *Well done good and faithful Servants.* Now (says St. *Paul*) *I know in part, but then I shall know even as I am known.* Then shall the Just behold and know the invisible Nature of the Trinity; the Power of the Father, the Wisdom of the Son, and the Goodness of the Holy Ghost; the Bottomless depths of God's Judgments, now unsearchable, shall then be seen, even as the Prophet *David* saith, *Psal.* 36. 9. *In thy light shall we see light*; to the Glory of which Kingdom, God of his infinite Mercy bring us all, *Amen.*

CHAP.

CHAP. XVIII.

The Excellency, Power and Effica of Prayer, in it's Use, Nature a Divine Operation, conducing to t main grounds of Piety and Devo tion.

PRayer is a Language in which w direct our minds to God, in ho Addresses, spreading our humble Pet tions before him, waiting with Pa ence and Submission to his divine Wi for a gracious Answer, and the Praye of the Righteous may, in some Sense, s said, to command an Audience of th Almighty; for he will not turn away fro their Supplications, and St. *John* in h Revelation tells us, They are of suc Esteem in Heaven, that he saw the offered up as Incense before the Throne in golden Censors, as a sweet per fume in the Nostrils of Omnipotence but Prayer that will be so received must be made with Faith and Hope; tha is, we must certainly believe, we shall re ceive the Grace God has commanded us to ask; and we must hope for suc things which he permitted us to Peti tion for, and therefore be sure to as

nothing

thing unlawful, or unnecessary for
: Our blessed Saviour in his holy
rm of Prayer, has laid down the
ost Excellent things we can pray for,
hich, by the pious Orator, may be
ore inlarged on, as our Necessities re-
uire; not but that God knows our
rants and needs better then we do
ur selves, before we open our Lips;
et since he has commanded us to pray,
t is all the reason in the World, that
e should make daily Supplication
nd Prayer to him, who is our Prote-
ctor and Provider, from whose Bounty
we receive all the good things, both
emporal and spiritual that accrue un-
o us; nor is there any Duty more
ehemently pressed to us in the Word
of God, than this of Prayer, *viz.* con-
tinue instant in Prayer: strive in Prayer: labouring fervently in Prayer: Night and Day praying excedingly, praying always with all Prayer; and St. *Paul* calls it, *watching unto Prayer*, and St. *Peter*, *pray earnestly*.

Our Prayers therefore, must be fervent, intense, earnest and importunate, when we pray for things of high Concernment; yet limiting our Desires in all things, with Submission to God's Will; and if we expect good Returns, our Desires must be lasting, our Prayers

ers frequent and assiduous, and co
nual; not asking for a Blessing o
and then giving it over, as if we w
indifferent whether we had it or
but daily renewing our Suit, and E
citing our Hope and Faith, and Patie
and Long-suffering, Religion and Resi
tion and Self-denial, in all degrees
shall be put to: This Circumstance of
Duty, our blessed Saviour taught
when he said, *That men ought alway*
pray, and not to faint, Luk. 18. which
nifies the frequent doing the Duty
General: but because we cannot
ways ask several things, though
have frequent need of them, the P
cept comes home to this very C
cumstance, and *St. Paul* calls it, *P*
without ceasing; and he tells us, he
sought the Lord thrice, and our Sa
our prayed thrice in the Garden,
holy *David* prayed thrice a day,
Prophet *Daniel* did the like, and
ought [redacted] that desire to prevail,
be possessed of their Desires.

There is more in it still; it is
only Bulwark between our Souls,
the many Temptations that would
therwise break in upon them; it is th
resistance that makes the Devil
us, and that violence that takes H
ven by force, and disarms the hand

Almighty, of the flaming Bolts of Wrath, and Fury, and is the very e and Soul of Religion, but then it must with all our Heart, with all our Soul, th all our Affections, for unless our earts, and our Voices go together, our rayers will hardly find Acceptance: for w can we expect God will hear us, hen our thoughts are wandring, so at we mind not what we say our lves? The Devil knows, Prayer is the reatest Engine to overthrow his De-ces, and therefore is most busie to nder it, by often making it seem te-ious to us, rendring us drowsie and ll in the performance of this holy uty; perswading us fewer and shorter rayers will serve turn; Insinuating, hat God knows our minds without eaking to him, and therefore we need ot trouble him nor our selves, with ng Harangues; and so by degrees ffening our Devotion, and quenching ur Zeal, and fervency of Spirit, he revail with us to grow supine, and ray but seldome, or not at all. O et Christians consider the danger of omplying with this Temptation; for y laying aside this spiritual Weapon, ou lay your self open to your spiri-al Enemy, that seeks to lead you aptive to his dismal Realms of Woe and

and Torment, who being himself e
nally excluded from God's favo
makes it his Endeavour by a thou
Wiles to draw us into the same
demnation. Therefore always be
pared to struggle against his Tem
tions, and that the Spirit of Pr
be not in any degree wanting, yet p
as fervently as you can to God, to
able you to pray better; to strengt
your Faith, encrease your Zeal,
enflame you with Love, and an ard
desire of Heavenly things.

In all Forms of Prayer mingle P
tions with Thanksgiving, that you
endear the present Prayer and fu
Blessing, by returning praise and tha
giving for what we have already
ceived; and according to St. *Paul's*
vice, *be careful in nothing, but in every t*
by prayer and supplication with thanksgiv
let your requests be made known unto God,
so we shall not fail of our desires.

CHA

CHAP. XIX.

Select Prayers on all necessary Occasions, for Families, or single Persons in publick or private.

A Morning Prayer on the Lord's-Day.

O Almighty and everlasting Lord God, who hast safely brought me to the beginning of this thy Holy-day; I praise and magnifie thy blessed Name: Behold O Lord God of Heaven and Earth, a soul prostrate before thee, desirous to be filled with such an awful Sense of thy Divine Majesty, that no other thing may interpose it self whilst I am in thy Presence; fix in my constant thoughts a stedfast Attention to thy most holy Word; inspire me with devout Affections, when I set forth thy praise, and render thanks for all thy Benefits, and excite in me such a fervent Desire for all those things I ask of thee, that I may feel my self better disposed by these Addresses to thee, and in hearing thy Word the rest of this Holy-day, through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour, *Amen.*

An Evening Prayer for the Lord's Day.

O Infinite and most adorable Divinity, how exceeding great is thy Goodness and Mercy towards me, that am but Dust and Ashes, that thy care and providence has protected me this day, and not only filled me with temporal Good things, but sown in my Heart thy Holy word; Lord, let it spring up to increase, that I may grow in Grace, and become a Plant worthy to remain in thy Vineyard: Lord enable me in the knowledge thou hast given me in holy things, that they may encrease in my Soul, and spread it like a pregnant Cloud into refreshing showers of Joy and Comfort, that I may ever have cause to be thankful for the Improvement of this thy day, and overflow with gladness, that by not misspending it, I am not set back in the Account of thy service: Lord consider that of my self I am not able to will, or to do any thing that is good, and therefore must cast my self at thy Feet, imploring thy Assistance to ingraft me as a profitable Branch in the true Vine, even as a Member of the glorious Head, the Lord Jesus. Grant, O Lord, this and whatever thou thinkest more needful

to

to the raising my love and affections to contemplate and admire thy goodness and mercy, through the merits of my blessed Saviour, and thy well-beloved Son, Jesus Christ, *Amen.*

A Morning Prayer for a Family at any time.

ALl honour, glory, and praise be given to thee, O Lord, our Creator, Redeemer and Comforter for all the Mercies and Blessings from time to time bestowed upon us; for our Food, Raiment, Health, Strength, Friends, and all other thy Mercies and Favours; tho' we confess our selves unworthy of the least regard from thee, whom we have so highly offended, yet we hope thou wilt accept of this our Morning Oblation which we here make before thee, beseeching thee to pardon and forgive those sins, the remembrance of which is grievous unto us; and vouchsafe us the Grace of thy Holy Spirit to enable us to do thy will with care and diligence for the time to come: Let it ever accompany and assist us according as thou seest us sincerely desirous and studious to please thee, in all the actions of a Holy Life; in Chastity and Temperance, Justice and Fidelity, Mercy and Charity, Meekness and Humility, Patience Contentedness, Innocency and Peace, and Thanksgiving, to thee the Father of Mercies, in Christ Jesus our Lord, *Amen.*

An Evening Prayer for a Family.

O God, most holy and eternal, we beseech thee to enflame our hearts with a holy Desire of thee, which Love we beseech thee to kindle in us by the comfortable Light of thy Holy Spirit, and not in us alone, but likewise the Hearts of all our Friends and Relations, that we may love thee with all our minds and might, and serve thee to the utmost of our power; that being inspired with the good Motion of thy Holy Spirit, Christ may dwell in our Hearts by Faith; that we being grounded in Love, may be able to comprehend what is the height, depth, breadth and length of the Love of Christ, which passeth knowledge; that being perfectly enflamed with Duty, it may at last be changed from Duty to Rewards, and we may all pass from Earth to Heaven, and remain with thee, O Father, and with thy Son Christ Jesus, for ever, *Amen.*

A Morning Prayer for a private Person.

O Eternal and Almighty God! what shall I render unto thy Divine Majesty for all the benefits thou hast bestowed upon thy Servant; thou art my Creator and Preserver; thou hast brought me from my Mothers Womb, and hast followed me with thy Blessings and Favours: thou hast kept me from the Terrors that go abroad by night, and the Shafts that

flye

fye by day: Grant therefore, that in all Afflictions that may happen from thy gracious hand of Fatherly Correction, a constant Patience, and at all times do with me as seems best in thy sight. O give me Humility, Penitence, and a meek and humble Spirit; that with great Joy and Patience I may be acceptable to thee whilst I live, and entirely ready for thee when I dye; that having had a Resurrection of Grace in this Life, I may have a joyfull Resurrection to Glory in the Life to come: Grant this for thy dear Son's sake, Christ Jesus, *Amen.*

An Evening Prayer, &c.

O Lord God, my most mercifull and compassionate Father, laying aside all worldly Business, and worldly Thoughts I prostrate my self before thee, and adore thy Divine Majesty, giving thee all thanks and praise for thy protection over me this day, that thou of thy Goodness hast vouchsafed to keep me in safety, and prosper my Undertakings; that thou hast given me this Opportunity to return thee thanks for those many Mercies thou hast bestowed upon me, by blessing me in my Relations and Friends, comforting and upholding me in all the Stages of my Life: Lord, continue thy goodness unto me, during my stay in this transitory World; so that under thy protection I may be e-

ver in safety, to praise and adore thy holy Name, and in assurance thou heareſt me, and art every where, and never slumbereſt nor sleepeſt, I commit my self to the care of thy watchfull Providence this night, that I may rise with the Sun to glorifie thee both in Soul and Body, who art a God of Mercy and everlasting Kindness: Which grant for the sake of thy dear Son and our blessed Saviour, Christ Jesus, *Amen.*

A Prayer for the King and Queen, and for their Success and Victory over their Enemies.

O God the Fountain of all Goodness, in whose hands are all the Ends of the Earth, and who disposeſt of all Affairs as seems best to thy boundless Wisdom, Lord now stretch forth thy right hand, and make bare thine Arm to defend and protect *William* and *Mary*, thy Servants, and our dread Soveraigns, from the power and malice of those that rise up against them: Let their Devices be confounded and brought to nought, that seek their hurt; let their Enemies be scattered before them, and establish their Throne in the Hearts of thy People, that they may be a nursing Father, and a nursing Mother to thy Church; that Truth, Religion, and Piety may flourish and abound amongst us, showre on them the Blessings of the right hand, and of the left, and glad their hearts with the Melody of Joy,

and

and Triumph; let them reign long and happily over us, and make us a willing and obedient people, that so thy Favours may descend like the Dew of Heaven upon our heads and hearts; and this we most humbly beg in the Name, and for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord, *Amen.*

A Prayer for our Parents, Friends, or Relations.

O Lord God Almighty, as thou hast been graciously pleased to send me into the World, that I might employ the Talent thou hast entrusted me withall, to thy honour and glory, I humbly beseech thee to bless me, and in giving me thy Blessing, bless my Parents, Friends and Relations, that we may be a solace and comfort to each other, and grow up in Grace and Knowledge of thy Truth; deliver them and me from violent Diseases, sudden Death, the hands of the Oppressor, and from all outward Calamities, or inward trouble of mind, that with an uninterrupted Peace and Quiet of Body and Soul, we may joyn in praising thy Holy Name, who art the Author and Giver of all good things, and from whom alone is our being and our well-being; thou alone art the Lord that helpeth us! O make us glad through thy Works, that we may rejoyce in giving praises for the operation of thy hands, and say, *Blessed be the Lord God, even the Lord God of* Israel, *who*

only doth wonderous and gracious things; and blessed be the name of thy Majesty for ever, Amen.

A Prayer against the Danger of any publick Calamity, as War, Pestilence, Famine, Fire, Inundations, &c.

O Lord, who can stand before thee if thou art Angry! in thine Indignation thou takest away our Breath, and we turn again to the Dust; yet hast thou promised Mercy to those that seek thee upon Condition they confess and forsake their Sins: O Lord, we humbly acknowledge that our manifold Transgressions might justly pull down thy Wrath and heavy Displeasure on us; and therefore trembling at the Sense of thy Judgments, we fall prostrate before thee, imploring thy divine Majesty to look with Eyes of pity upon our Failings and Infirmities, and weigh our Sins in the Ballance with thy Mercies; that so the infinite Disproportion between them may stay their armed Justice, that stretches out the Sword so terribly over us. Lord, forget not thy ancient Loving-kindness, nor hide thy Face from us in time of Trouble; but turn from us those Evils which we have justly deserved; and let a sincere Repentance disarm thee of thy Anger; for the sake of thy dear Son Christ Jesus, *Amen.*

A Prayer

A Prayer in a Storm at Sea or Land.

O Great and Almighty God, whom the Winds and the Lightnings obey, and who restrainest at thy pleasure the Bottles of Heaven; look upon us whom the outragious Elements assault, and be our present help in this the time of our greatest need; even now danger and death stand before our Eyes in their most affrighting and amazing Forms, and we are almost at our Wits end, Lord, we have none to help, or save us, but thee; we have none to cry to for Succour, but our God; O look then upon us with Eyes of Compassion, and rebuke the Storms that they overwhelm us not, and bring our Lives to an end: O save us, that we may live to praise thee, and tell of all the Wonders thou hast done for our Souls; for Jesus Christ his sake, *Amen, Amen.*

A Prayer to be said by, or with, a sick Person.

O Lord to whom belong the Issues of Life and Death, look down with a healing Compassion from Heaven, the Habitation of thy Holiness, upon thy poor and unworthy Servant, now languishing upon his Bed of Sickness: O thou that wilt not break the bruised Reed, nor quench the smoking Flax, speak Comfort to his Soul; O thou Physitian of Life restore him, and lead him from the brink of

the Grave, that he may remain a longer Monument of thy tender Love to thy Creatures, and Patience to what thou hast ordained him to undergoe: however in Life and in Death, let him place his Confidence on thee, and wholly rely upon thee; that finding a Seal of Pardon for his Sins, he may chearfully submit to thy divine Will, and resign his Soul unto thy most mercifull hand, through the Merits and Mediation of our blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, *Amen.*

A Prayer to be said on Christmas-day.

O Lord most holy, glorious, and almighty God; O thou that makest the Tongues of Infants Eloquent, instruct my Understanding that I may know thee; enform my Mind that I may delight in thee, and enlarge my Heart that I may truly seek thee, till I have found thee: Repleniſh me with spiritual and temporal nourishment; that thereby being enabled, I may with sincere Devotion welcome the happy Nativity of my blessed Saviour, and with good and tender Affections entertain this Feast of the first humble Rising of the Sun of Justice, of Righteousness and Peace, that I may be better disposed, and stronger engaged to follow him throughout the whole Course of my Life; that I may rejoyce to run the

the Race of Vertue, Piety, and Holiness, and in some good measure enlighten the World with Truth, as being enflamed with the bright Beams of divine Love, that in the end both they and I may safely arrive into the Glory of Eternal Rest, to praise the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, Ages without end, *Amen.*

A Prayer in Preparation for the keeping Lent.

O Thou compassionate Preserver of Men, give us Grace to fast, mourn and weep for our sins, that have caused thee to undergo such pains and sufferings as to cloath thy divine Majesty in Flesh, undergoe the Sharpness of Circumcision, be tempted, and undergo a forty days fasting in a desolate Wilderness, to sweat Bloud, be scourged, reviled, blasphemed, smitten, spit upon, and lastly to dye the Death of the Cross; all this, and much more thou suffereſt for our sake, besides the pressing weight of our Sins on thy Soul: O Jesus grant we may rightly consider what thou hast done and suffered for us; make us truly humble, and greatly repent us for all our Crimes that have occasioned thy heavy Sufferings, and made thy Soul heavy even to Death, and as thou fasted about this time for our sins, so enable us to mortifie our vile Body and Souls, by a true Repentance, and fast

from Sin, and make us in all things obedient to thy holy Will; to this end we implore thee to lay all our Pride in the Dust, that we, notwithstanding our weakness, may truly honour thee in seeking diligently to please thee both in Life and Death: enable us we beseech thee this to do in compassion towards us, and for thy own dear prevailing Mercies sake.

A Prayer to be said on Easter-day.

O My dear God fill my Soul with a Sense of Spiritual Delights, that I may with earnest Longings Hunger and Thirst after Righteousness, and feast thereon with Joy and Gladness; that devoting my self to thy Service, I may be filled with Divine Wisdom; that I continuing patient in well-doing, may be made a Child of the Resurrection; wherefore that I may deserve so great a Favour, I beseech thee to send me constant Patience and at all times be with me as seems best in thy godly Wisdom; that, O Lord, as thou on this day hast broken the Bonds of Death, and triumphed over the Grave; so give me assurance that through thy Merits in the Resurrection of the great day, I shall rise victorious over the Grave and Hell, to live and reign with thee in the Kingdom thou hast prepared for them that love thee; O Grant me this for thy

Merits

Merits and Mercies sake, my dear Lord and ever blessed Redeemer.

A Prayer for Whitsunday.

O Thou holy and blessed Spirit, that didst this day inspire the Apostles with divine Light and endless Comforts, breathe into my Soul an ardent Desire of Divine Things, that with the Father and the Son, Trinity in Unity, I may ever bless thy wonderfull operation and power, who for our Comfort hast sent forth thy Sound to the ends of the Earth, and spread before us the Knowledge of thy Truth, to bring us out of Darkness and Error, into marvellous Light; and thou O Almighty Father, who hast given to thy Servants Grace by the Confession of a True Faith to acknowledge the Glory of the Eternal Trinity, and in the power of the Divine Majesty to worship the Unity: O continue thy Mercy to me, that I may live in a stedfast Confession of this Faith, and bring forth sutable Fruits by the Power and Might of thee, O Glorious Deity! who hast promised continual Assistance to those that ask it, O grant it me, who humbly sue for it, for thy tender Compassion, and dear Mercies sake, *Amen*

A Prayer to be said by one that is troubled in Mind.

O Thou infinite God of Mercy, look down upon me thy miserable Creature, with the Eyes of thy Pity and Compassion; consider I am but Dust and Ashes and not able to stand before thee, if thou shouldst enter into Judgment against me: O set me not as a Mark against thee, lest I am consumed; if thy Anger wax hot, or thy Wrath be but a little kindled who can come into thy Presence; Lord, write not bitter things against me, nor make me to possess my former Iniquities: Let not thy Wrath lye heavy upon me, but remove thy pressing hand, for my Soul is full of Trouble: O thou that wilt not break the bruised Reed, nor quench the smoaking Flax, in thy tender Mercy consider me thy poor distressed Creature, and remove the Agonies of my Soul; the Tempter pushes on furiously to drive me to Despair; but O can I doubt that thou, O Lord, who art the Fountain of Mercies, and wilt not the Eternal Death of a poor Sinner prostrate before thee, wilt not have Pity and Compassion of me a miserable Creature, whom thine own hands hath made: Ah! let me yet lay hold of the sweet and comfortable Promises, and with a stedfast Faith and Reliance

Reliance on thee, not leave thee till thou hast melted towards me in the tender Bowels of thy Compassion; and by turning upon me thine aimable Eyes, hast darted Comfort into my Soul; that this heavy load now pressing me down into the pit of sorrow and affliction, being removed, I may hear of Joy and Gladness, and bless thy holy Name for this tryal of my Patience: Yet Lord, however thou art pleased to deal with me, I hope by thy Divine assistance, so to support my self, in this the day of my great Tryal, that I may bear it as thy Chastisement, and be bettered by it; putting my whole Trust in thee, and not placing my Confidence any where else; the which in Confidence, that thou will Enable me to do, I humbly cast my self at the Foot-stool of thy Mercy-seat; and if I perish, I will perish at the Fountain of Mercy; but O Lord! I know thy Mercies are greater than thy Judgments, and therefore, in hopes of thy returning Favours, I will take what Comfort I can in thy Promises, and the Merits of my blessed Lord and Saviour, who, for my sake, has Triumphed over Death and Hell; and has lovingly called unto him, all that are weary and heavy laden, to give them rest; so Lord Jesus, send it to my wearied and troubled Soul,

for

for thy Promise, and thy Mercies sake, *Amen.*

A Prayer for a Woman near her time, or in Travel.

O Most Gracious and Eternal Maker, and Creator of all things, who gavest to every thing a Being, before it was Commanding to multiply and encrease, Remember me thy Creature, and look down upon me with Compassionate Eyes, and let thy helping hand be with me in my present Condition, and approaching danger: O Comfort me with thy Divine Love, and let the Rays of thy Mercy shine upon me, that my Fears may be dispelled, and the heavines of my Soul turned into Joy, that I may in safety bring forth a tender Plant fit to be set, and spring up in the Vineyard of my Lord, which Watered by thy assisting Grace, may bring forth Fruits of Righteousnes to the Praise and Glory of thy holy Name, *Amen.*

A Prayer for Perseverance in Well-doing.

O Lord God Almighty, who hast enlightned me with thy holy Spirit, to understand the ways of thy Truth; let thy Grace guide me to Persevere therein, that I may be always mindful of my Duty, and have the fear and reverence

verence of thy holy Name before my Eyes continually, that I may so speak and act in all my words and ways, that my Care may ever be to keep my self Inoffensive towards thee my God, and towards my Neighbour, doing all the Good I can in this Life; bearing Injuries Patiently, as Afflictions for my Sin, and in all lowliness and humility, and sufferings; in imitating as far as in me lies, the glorious Example of my blessed Saviour: O Root out of my heart all Pride and vain Imaginations, and let me see that I am but poor Dust and Ashes, Generated of Corruption, and that I must soon return to the Chambers of the Grave, and there be reverted to my primitive dust: Then let me walk, that my Light may shine before men, to glorifie thee my Heavenly Father, through the mercies and merits of Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour, *Amen.*

A Prayer for Unity, Peace, and Concord.

O Glorious and Eternal King of Peace, pour thy Grace into our Hearts, that it may make us see the Error of our ways, and turn to thee, that thou mayest imprint upon our Souls the peace of thy Kingdom, that we may live in Brotherly Love and Unity, and in perfect Charity with all men, that so we may be

be happy here, and more abundantly so hereafter, by the flourishing of true Religion and Piety amongst us; that these Kingdoms wherein we live, may ever share thy Blessings and Favours, through the merits, and mercies, of our blessed Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, *Amen.*

A Descrip-

A Description of Faith, and how we ought to believe in God for Salvation.

FAith, the Apostle tells us, is the Evidence of things not seen, as being that whereby, as to sacred matters appertaining to our Religion, we believe things we see not, and is manifested to be the pure Gift of God; we find St. *Thomas* after this Gift was given him, seeing only the bodily Manhood of our Saviour, and not his Deity, which was invisible, and is incomprehensible; notwithstanding he believed him to be God and Man, Crying out, as in an Extasie, *My Lord my God*, &c. Firmly to believe in this kind, *saith St.* Austin, Is to think upon a thing with consent to that Thought, as when thou thinkest the Son of God was born of a Virgin, and took man's nature upon him, and consentest to that Thought, and this proceeds, and is abundantly strengthned by the light of Grace, in a true Believer: there may be a Superficial Belief, that is most commonly weak, faint and dying, but this is no grounded Faith, as being a bare belief, without any steadfast root in the heart, and apt to wither or change upon every extraordinary Occasion; but firm Faith rooted and watered by Grace,

is

is an immoveable Plant, growing up to Life, and by it the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the Foundation of Blessedness, dwelleth in the hearts of the Believers.

Considerations on Hope, and its definition, &c.

HOpe is of a lower Degree than the former, being only a desire of those things we expect and wish for, not having them yet in possession, or no certain assurance of them, as when I hope I shall be happy in the World to come; or that I am in God's Favour, my Sins pardoned; and it is attended with Patience and Contentedness, bearing up our Souls in all afflictions, and is the only antidote against affliction; and this Hope is placed between two Extreams, the one being the highest, which is the ineffable assurance of eternal Blessedness, and the other the lowest, and basest; which is despairing in God's mercies for Salvation; but the more that man approacheth to the first extream, the more he rejoices, as being freed from the latter, and the more perfect is his Hope. As for the definition

finition of Hope, it is that by which we hope and look for Eternal Goodness; and it has two Objects, the first, The perfect enjoying his presence, and the other, is all the necessary means to come unto the clear seeing and enjoying God; and these means are the remissions: The help of God's Grace, Faith unfeigned, Charitable Deeds, and Agreeableness unto God, and all we hope for, we ought to crave with Prayer, and Incessant Implorations, as remission of Sins, Regeneration, and Newness of Life, encrease of Grace and Virtue, and the like; but as for our hope of temporal things, let us lay no great stress upon it; for if we seek the Kingdom of God, and the Righteousness thereof, all those things shall be added to us.

The Excellency of Charity.

THe two former are by St. *Paul* esteemed without this, of little value; for Charity is a Virtue, by which it is loved for the love of himself and our Neighbour, for the love of God, or in God; and he that is wanting of Charity, hath nothing in him to obtain everlasting life; for it is given when the holy Spirit entereth

reth into the heart of man, and constrains us to love God, for his own sake, and our Neighbour for God's sake; to love God, for his own sake, is to love him for himself, and because he is God; and this must be done with all our hearts, our souls, and strengths, fearing in all things to offend, and striving in all things to please him; to love our Neighbour, as he is God's Creature, and to do all the Good we can, striving to live in peace perfect Love and Charity; and so the God of Peace shall in the End give us the fullness of his love and favour

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